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HANSARD'S

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THIRD SERIES,

COMMENCING WITH THE ACCESSION OF

WILLIAM IV.

12° VICTORIÆ, 1849.

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THE FIRST TO THE TWENTY-EIGHTH

DAY OF FEBRUARY, 1849.

First Volume of the Session.

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THE MINISTRY.

IN THE CABINET.

First Lord of the Treasury	Right Hon. Lord John Russell.
Lord Chancellor	Right Hon. Lord Cottenham.
Chancellor of the Exchequer	Right Hon. Sir Charles Wood, Bt.
President of the Council	Most Hon. Marquess of Lansdowne.
Privy Seal	Right Hon. Earl of Minto.
Home Secretary	Right Hon. Sir George Grey, Bt.
Foreign Secretary	Right Hon. Viscount Palmerston.
Colonial Secretary	Right Hon. Earl Grey.
First Lord of the Admiralty	Right Hon. Sir Francis Thornhill Baring, Bt.
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster	Right Hon. Lord Campbell.
President of the Board of Control	Right Hon. Sir John Cam Hobhouse, Bt.
Chief Commissioner of Woods, Forests, &c.	Right Hon. Earl of Carlisle.
Postmaster General	Most Hon. Marquess of Clanricarde.
President of the Board of Trade	Right Hon. Henry Labouchere.

NOT IN THE CABINET.

Commander in Chief	Duke of Wellington.
Master General of the Ordnance	Most Hon. Marquess of Anglesey.
Paymaster of the Forces, and Vice-President of the Board of Trade	Right Hon. Earl Granville.
Master of the Mint	Right Hon. Richard Lalor Sheil.
Secretary at War	Right Hon. Fox Maule.
Chief Secretary for Ireland	Right Hon. Sir William Meredyth Somerville, Bt.
Joint Secretaries of the Treasury	Henry Tufnell, Esq. and John Parker, Esq.
Secretary of the Admiralty	Henry George Ward, Esq.
Under Secretary for the Home Department	George Cornewall Lewis, Esq.
Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs	Right Hon. Lord Eddisbury.
Under Secretary for the Colonies	Benjamin Hawes, Esq.
Secretaries of the Board of Control	Hon. J. E. Elliot, and James Wilson, Esq.
Lords of the Treasury	William Gibson Craig, Esq., Henry Rich, Esq., and Richard Montesquieu Bellew, Esq.
Lords of the Admiralty	Rear Admiral James Whitley Deans Dundas, Hon. Captain Maurice Fitzhardinge Berkeley, Captain Lord John Hay, Hon. William Francis Cowper, and Captain Alexander Milne.
Surveyor General of the Ordnance	Major General Charles Richard Fox.
Clerk of the Ordnance	Colonel Hon. George Anson.
Attorney General	Sir John Jervis, Knt.
Solicitor General	Sir John Romilly, Knt.
Judge-Advocate General	Right Hon. William Goodenough Hayter.
Chief Poor Law Commissioner	Matthew Talbot Baines, Esq.

SCOTLAND.

Solicitor General for Scotland	Thomas Maitland, Esq.
Lord Advocate of Scotland	Right Hon. Andrew Rutherfurd.

IRELAND.

Lord Lieutenant	Right Hon. Earl of Clarendon.
Lord Chancellor	Right Hon. Maziere Brady.
Attorney General	Right Hon. James Henry Monahan.
Solicitor General	John Hatchell, Esq.

QUEEN'S HOUSEHOLD.

Lord Chamberlain	Most Hon. Marquess of Breadalbane.
Lord Steward	Right Hon. Earl Fortescue.
Master of the Horse	Duke of Norfolk.
Master of the Buckhounds	Right Hon. Earl of Bessborough.
Vice-Chamberlain	Right Hon. Lord Edward Howard.
Treasurer of the Household	Right Hon. Lord Arthur Marcus Cecil Hill.
Chief Equerry and Clerk Marshal	Lord Alfred Henry Paget.
Mistress of the Robes	Duchess of Sutherland.

ROLL OF THE

LORDS SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL

IN THE *SECOND SESSION* OF THE *FIFTEENTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND.*

12° VICTORIÆ, 1849.

His Royal Highness THE PRINCE of WALES.

His Royal Highness ERNEST AUGUSTUS Duke of CUMBERLAND and TEVIOTDALE. (*King of Hanover.*)

His Royal Highness ADOLPHUS FREDERICK Duke of CAMBRIDGE.

JOHN BIRD Archbishop of CANTERBURY.

CHARLES CHRISTOPHER Lord COTTENHAM, *Lord Chancellor.*

THOMAS Archbishop of YORK.

RICHARD Archbishop of DUBLIN AND CASHEL.

HENRY Marquess of LANSDOWNE, *Lord President of the Council.*

GILBERT Earl of MINTO, *Lord Privy Seal.*

HENRY CHARLES Duke of NORFOLK, *Earl Marshal of England.*

EDWARD ADOLPHUS Duke of SOMERSET.

CHARLES Duke of RICHMOND.

HENRY Duke of GRAFTON.

HENRY Duke of BEAUFORT.

WILLIAM AUBREY DE VERE Duke of SAINT ALBANS.

FRANCIS GODOLPHIN D'ARCY Duke of LEEDS.

FRANCIS Duke of BEDFORD.

WILLIAM SPENCER Duke of DEVONSHIRE.

GEORGE Duke of MARLBOROUGH.

JOHN HENRY Duke of RUTLAND.

ALEXANDER Duke of BRANDON. (*Duke of Hamilton.*)

WILLIAM HENRY CAVENDISH Duke of PORTLAND.

GEORGE Duke of MANCHESTER.

HENRY PELHAM Duke of NEWCASTLE.

ALGERNON Duke of NORTHUMBERLAND.

ARTHUR Duke of WELLINGTON.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET, Duke of BUCKINGHAM and CHANDOS.

GEORGE GRANVILLE Duke of SUTHERLAND.

HENRY Duke of CLEVELAND.

JOHN Marquess of BREADALBANE, *Lord Chamberlain of the Household.*

JOHN Marquess of WINCHESTER.

GEORGE Marquess of TWEEDDALE. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

HENRY Marquess of LANSDOWNE. (*In another place as Lord President of the Council.*)

GEORGE FERRARS Marquess TOWNSHEND.

JAMES BROWNLOW WILLIAM Marquess of SALISBURY.

JOHN ALEXANDER Marquess of BATH.

JAMES Marquess of ABERCORN.

RICHARD Marquess of HERTFORD.

JOHN PATRICK Marquess of BUTE.

BROWNLOW Marquess of EXETER.

SPENCER JOSHUA ALWYNE Marquess of NORTHAMPTON.

GEORGE CHARLES Marquess CAMDEN.

HENRY WILLIAM Marquess of ANGLESEY.

GEORGE HORATIO Marquess of CHOLMONDELEY.

PAULYN REGINALD SERLO Marquess of HASTINGS.

CHARLES Marquess of AILESBURY.

George Thomas John Marquess of Westmeath. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Frederick William Marquess of Bristol.

Archibald Marquess of Ailsa.

John Marquess of Breadalbane. (*In another Place as Lord Chamberlain of the Household.*)

Richard Marquess of Westminster.

Constantine Henry Marquess of Normanby.

Hugh Earl Fortescue, *Lord Steward of the Household.*

John Earl of Shrewsbury.

Edward Earl of Derby.

Francis Theophilus Henry Earl of Huntingdon.

Robert Henry Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery.

William Earl of Devon.

Thomas Earl of Suffolk and Berkshire.

William Basil Percy Earl of Denbigh.

John Earl of Westmoreland.

George Augustus Frederick Albemarle Earl of Lindsey.

George Harry Earl of Stamford and Warrington.

George William Earl of Winchilsea and Nottingham.

George Earl of Chesterfield.

Henry Earl of Thanet.

John William Earl of Sandwich.

Arthur Algernon Earl of Essex.

James Thomas Earl of Cardigan.

George William Frederick Earl of Carlisle.

Walter Francis Earl of Doncaster. (*Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry.*)

Cropley Earl of Shaftesbury.

——— Earl of Berkeley.

Montagu Earl of Abingdon.

John Savile Earl of Scarborough.

William Charles Earl of Albemarle.

George William Earl of Coventry.

George Earl of Jersey.

John Earl Poulett.

George Sholto Earl of Morton. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

Cospatrick Alexander Earl of Home. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

David Earl of Airlie. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

David Earl of Leven and Melville. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

Dunbar James Earl of Selkirk. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

Thomas John Earl of Orkney. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

Francis William Earl of Seafield. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

Alfred Earl of Oxford and Earl Mortimer.

Washington Sewallis Earl Ferrers.

William Earl of Dartmouth.

Charles Augustus Earl of Tankerville.

Heneage Earl of Aylesford.

George Augustus Earl Cowper.

Philip Henry Earl Stanhope.

Robert Earl of Harborough.

Thomas Earl of Macclesfield.

George William Richard Earl of Pomfret.

James Earl Graham. (*Duke of Montrose.*)

William Earl Waldegrave.

Bertram Earl of Ashburnham.

Charles Earl of Harrington.

John Charles Earl of Portsmouth.

Henry Richard Earl Brooke and Earl of Warwick.

George Robert Earl of Buckinghamshire.

Charles William Earl Fitzwilliam.

Francis Earl of Guilford.

James Earl Cornwallis.

Charles Philip Earl of Hardwicke.

Henry Stephen Earl of Ilchester.

George John Earl De Lawarr.

William Earl of Radnor.

Frederick Earl Spencer.

Henry George Earl Bathurst.

Arthur Wills Blundell Sandys Trumbull Windsor Earl of Hillsborough. (*Marquess of Downshire.*)

George William Frederick Earl of Clarendon.

William David Earl of Mansfield.

William Earl of Abergavenny.

Henry John Earl Talbot.

George Augustus Frederick John Earl Strange. (*Duke of Athol.*) (*Lord Glenlyon.*)

Ernest Augustus Earl of Mount Edgcumbe.

HUGH Earl FORTESCUE. (*In another place as Lord Steward of the Household.*)

EDWARD Earl of DIGBY.

GEORGE Earl of BEVERLEY.

HENRY JOHN GEORGE Earl of CARNARVON.

CHARLES CECIL COPE Earl of LIVERPOOL.

GEORGE Earl CADOGAN.

JAMES HOWARD Earl of MALMESBURY.

FRANCIS WILLIAM Earl of CHARLEMONT. (*Lord Charlemont.*) (*Elected for Ireland.*)

STEPHEN Earl of MOUNT CASHELL. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

JOHN Earl of MAYO. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

JOHN Earl of ERNE. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

JOHN OTWAY O'CONNOR Earl of DESART. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

WILLIAM Earl of WICKLOW. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

GEORGE CHARLES Earl of LUCAN. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

JAMES Earl of BANDON. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

JAMES DUPRE Earl of CALEDON. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

JAMES ALEXANDER Earl of ROSSLYN.

WILLIAM Earl of CRAVEN.

ARTHUR GEORGE Earl of ONSLOW.

CHARLES Earl of ROMNEY.

HENRY THOMAS Earl of CHICHESTER.

THOMAS Earl of WILTON.

EDWARD JAMES Earl of POWIS.

HORATIO Earl NELSON.

ARCHIBALD Earl of GOSFORD. (*Lord Worlingham.*) (*Elected for Ireland.*)

WILLIAM Earl of ROSSE. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

CHARLES WILLIAM Earl of CHARLEVILLE. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

CHARLES HERBERT Earl MANVERS.

HORATIO Earl of ORFORD.

HENRY Earl GREY.

WILLIAM Earl of LONSDALE.

DUDLEY Earl of HARROWBY.

HENRY Earl of HAREWOOD.

GILBERT Earl of MINTO. (*In another place as Lord Privy Seal.*)

CHARLES MURRAY Earl CATHCART.

JAMES WALTER Earl of VERULAM.

JOHN Earl BROWNLOW.

EDWARD GRANVILLE Earl of SAINT GERMANS.

EDMUND Earl of MORLEY.

GEORGE AUGUSTUS FREDERICK HENRY Earl of BRADFORD.

JOHN REGINALD Earl BEAUCHAMP.

RICHARD Earl of GLENGALL. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

THOMAS PHILIP Earl DE GREY.

JOHN Earl of ELDON.

GEORGE HENRY Earl of FALMOUTH.

RICHARD WILLIAM PENN Earl HOWE.

JOHN SOMMERS Earl SOMMERS.

JOHN EDWARD CORNWALLIS Earl of STRADBROKE.

WINDHAM HENRY Earl of DUNRAVEN. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

CHARLES WILLIAM Earl VANE. (*Marquess of Londonderry.*)

WILLIAM PITT Earl AMHERST.

JOHN FREDERICK Earl CAWDOR.

WILLIAM GEORGE Earl of MUNSTER.

WILLIAM Earl of BURLINGTON.

ROBERT Earl of CAMPERDOWN.

THOMAS WILLIAM Earl of LICHFIELD.

GEORGE FREDERICK D'ARCY Earl of DURHAM.

FREDERICK JOHN Earl of RIPON.

GRANVILLE GEORGE Earl GRANVILLE.

HENRY Earl of EFFINGHAM.

HENRY GEORGE FRANCIS Earl of DUCIE.

CHARLES ANDERSON WORSLEY Earl of YARBOROUGH.

JAMES HENRY ROBERT Earl INNES. (*Duke of Roxburgh.*)

THOMAS WILLIAM Earl of LEICESTER.

WILLIAM Earl of LOVELACE.

THOMAS Earl of ZETLAND.

CHARLES NOEL Earl of GAINSBOROUGH.

WILLIAM FITZHARDINGE Earl FITZHARDINGE.

EDWARD Earl of ELLENBOROUGH.

FRANCIS Earl of ELLESMERE.

JOHN Earl of STRAFFORD.

ROBERT Viscount HEREFORD.

JAMES Viscount STRATHALLAN. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

HENRY Viscount BOLINGBROKE and ST. JOHN.

GEORGE Viscount TORRINGTON.

AUGUSTUS FREDERICK Viscount LEINSTER. (*Duke of Leinster.*)

HENRY Viscount MAYNARD.

JOHN ROBERT Viscount SIDNEY.
FRANCIS WHELER Viscount HOOD.
JOHN Viscount DE VESCI. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
HAYES Viscount DONERAILE. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
CORNWALLIS Viscount HAWARDEN. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
JOHN BRUCE RICHARD Viscount O'NEILL. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
EDWARD JERVIS Viscount ST. VINCENT.
ROBERT Viscount MELVILLE.
WILLIAM LEONARD Viscount SIDMOUTH.
ROBERT EDWARD Viscount LORTON. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
GEORGE Viscount GORDON. (*Earl of Aberdeen.*)
EDWARD Viscount EXMOUTH.
JOHN HELY Viscount HUTCHINSON. (*Earl of Donoughmore.*)
WILLIAM CARR Viscount BERESFORD.
WILLIAM THOMAS Viscount CLANCARTY. (*Earl of Clancarty.*)
STAPLETON Viscount COMBERMERE.
CHARLES JOHN Viscount CANNING.
CHARLES JOHN Viscount CANTERBURY.
JOHN Viscount PONSONBY.
ROWLAND Viscount HILL.
HENRY Viscount HARDINGE.

CHARLES JAMES Bishop of LONDON.
EDWARD Bishop of DURHAM.
CHARLES RICHARD Bishop of WINCHESTER.
JOHN Bishop of LINCOLN.
CHRISTOPHER Bishop of BANGOR.
HUGH Bishop of CARLISLE.
GEORGE Bishop of ROCHESTER.
EDWARD Bishop of LLANDAFF.
RICHARD Bishop of BATH and WELLS.
JAMES HENRY Bishop of GLOUCESTER and BRISTOL.
HENRY Bishop of EXETER.
CHARLES THOMAS Bishop of RIPON.
EDWARD Bishop of SALISBURY.
EDWARD Bishop of NORWICH.
GEORGE Bishop of PETERBOROUGH.
CONNOP Bishop of ST. DAVID'S.
HENRY Bishop of WORCESTER.
ASHURST TURNER Bishop of CHICHESTER.
JOHN Bishop of LICHFIELD.
THOMAS Bishop of ELY.
SAMUEL Bishop of OXFORD.
THOMAS VOWLER Bishop of ST. ASAPH.
JAMES PRINCE Bishop of MANCHESTER.
RENN DICKSON Bishop of HEREFORD.
EDWARD Bishop of MEATH.
ROBERT Bishop of CASHEL, EMLY, WATERFORD, and LISMORE.
THOMAS Bishop of TUAM, KILLALA, and ACHONRY.

WILLIAM LENNOX LASCELLES Lord DE ROS.
JACOB Lord HASTINGS.
GEORGE EDWARD Lord AUDLEY.
PETER ROBERT Lord WILLOUGHBY DE ERESBY.
THOMAS Lord DACRE.
CHARLES RODOLPH Lord CLINTON.
THOMAS Lord CAMOYS.
MILES THOMAS Lord BEAUMONT.
CHARLES Lord STOURTON.
HENRY Lord BERNERS.
HENRY PEYTO Lord WILLOUGHBY DE BROKE.
GEORGE Lord VAUX of HARROWDEN.
HENRY Lord PAGET.
ST. ANDREW BEAUCHAMP Lord ST. JOHN of BLETSO.
CHARLES AUGUSTUS Lord HOWARD DE WALDEN.
WILLIAM FRANCIS HENRY Lord PETRE.
FREDERICK BENJAMIN Lord SAYE and SELE.
HENRY BENEDICT Lord ARUNDELL of WARDOUR.
JOHN Lord CLIFTON. (*Earl of Darnley.*)
JOSEPH THADDEUS Lord DORMER.
GEORGE HENRY Lord TEYNHAM.
GEORGE WILLIAM Lord STAFFORD.
GEORGE ANSON Lord BYRON.
WILLIAM Lord WARD.
HUGH CHARLES Lord CLIFFORD of CHUDLEIGH.
ALEXANDER GEORGE Lord SALTOUN. (*Elected for Scotland.*)
JOHN Lord GRAY. (*Elected for Scotland.*)
CHARLES Lord SINCLAIR. (*Elected for Scotland.*)
JOHN Lord ELPHINSTONE. (*Elected for Scotland.*)
JOHN Lord COLVILLE of CULROSS. (*Elected for Scotland.*)
JOHN Lord ROLLO. (*Elected for Scotland.*)
HENRY FRANCIS Lord POLWARTH. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

EDMUND Lord BOYLE. (*Earl of Cork and Orrery.*)

THOMAS ROBERT Lord HAY. (*Earl of Kinnoul.*)

DIGBY Lord MIDDLETON.

WILLIAM JOHN Lord MONSON.

HENRY Lord MONTFORT.

GEORGE WILLIAM FREDERICK Lord BRUCE.

GEORGE JOHN BRABAZON Lord PONSONBY. (*Earl of Bessborough.*)

GEORGE JOHN Lord SONDES.

NATHANIEL Lord SCARSDALE.

GEORGE Lord BOSTON.

HENRY EDWARD Lord HOLLAND.

GEORGE JAMES Lord LOVEL and HOLLAND. (*Earl of Egmont.*)

GEORGE JOHN Lord VERNON.

GEORGE DOUGLAS Lord SUNDRIDGE. (*Duke of Argyll.*)

EDWARD WILLIAM Lord HAWKE.

THOMAS HENRY Lord FOLEY.

GEORGE TALBOT Lord DYNEVOR.

THOMAS Lord WALSINGHAM.

WILLIAM Lord BAGOT.

CHARLES Lord SOUTHAMPTON.

FLETCHER Lord GRANTLEY.

ROBERT DENNETT Lord RODNEY.

JOHN Lord CARTERET.

RICHARD Lord BERWICK.

JOHN Lord SHERBORNE.

HENRY Lord TYRONE. (*Marquess of Waterford.*)

RICHARD Lord CARLETON. (*Earl of Shannon.*)

EDWARD Lord SUFFIELD.

GUY Lord DORCHESTER.

GEORGE Lord KENYON.

RICHARD Lord BRAYBROOKE.

GEORGE HAMILTON Lord FISHERWICK. (*Marquess of Donegal.*)

JAMES Lord DOUGLAS of DOUGLAS.

HENRY HALL Lord GAGE. (*Viscount Gage.*)

HENRY THOMAS Lord THURLOW.

ROBERT JOHN Lord AUCKLAND.

GEORGE WILLIAM Lord LYTTELTON.

HENRY Lord MENDIP. (*Viscount Clifden.*)

FRANCIS Lord STUART of CASTLE STUART. (*Earl of Moray.*)

RANDOLPH Lord STEWART of GARLIES. (*Earl of Galloway.*)

JAMES THOMAS Lord SALTERSFORD. (*Earl of Courtown.*)

CHARLES Lord BRODRICK. (*Viscount Midleton.*)

GEORGE Lord CALTHORPE.

ROBERT JOHN Lord CARRINGTON.

HENRY Lord BAYNING.

WILLIAM POWLETT Lord BOLTON.

JOHN Lord WODEHOUSE.

JOHN Lord NORTHWICK.

THOMAS ATHERTON Lord LILFORD.

THOMAS Lord RIBBLESDALE.

JOHN Lord FITZGIBBON. (*Earl of Clare.*)

CADWALLADER DAVIS Lord BLAYNEY. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

HENRY Lord FARNHAM. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

ROBERT Lord CLONBROCK. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

EDWARD Lord CROFTON. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

HENRY Lord DUNALLEY. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

HENRY FRANCIS SEYMOUR Lord MOORE. (*Marquess of Drogheda.*)

JOHN HENRY LOFTUS Lord LOFTUS. (*Marquess of Ely.*)

JOHN Lord CARYSFORT. (*Earl of Carysfort.*)

WILLIAM Lord ALVANLEY.

GEORGE RALPH Lord ABERCROMBY.

JOHN THOMAS Lord REDESDALE.

GEORGE Lord RIVERS.

ARTHUR MOYSES WILLIAM Lord SANDYS.

GEORGE AUGUSTUS FREDERICK CHARLES Lord SHEFFIELD. (*Earl of Sheffield.*)

DAVID MONTAGU Lord ERSKINE.

GEORGE JOHN Lord MONT EAGLE. (*Marquess of Sligo.*)

ARCHIBALD WILLIAM Lord ARDROSSAN. (*Earl of Eglintoun.*)

JAMES Lord LAUDERDALE. (*Earl of Lauderdale.*)

GEORGE ARTHUR HASTINGS Lord GRANARD. (*Earl of Granard.*)

HUNGERFORD Lord CREWE.

ALAN LEGGE Lord GARDNER.

JOHN THOMAS Lord MANNERS.

JOHN ALEXANDER Lord HOPETOUN. (*Earl of Hopetoun.*)

RICHARD Lord CASTLEMAINE. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

JAMES ANDREW Lord DALHOUSIE. (*Earl of Dalhousie.*)

GEORGE Lord MELDRUM. (*Marquess of Huntly.*)

JAMES Lord ROSS. (*Earl of Glasgow.*)

WILLIAM WILLOUGHBY Lord GRINSTEAD. (*Earl of Enniskillen.*)

WILLIAM HENRY TENNISON Lord FOXFORD. (*Earl of Limerick.*)

FRANCIS GEORGE Lord CHURCHILL.

FREDERIC JAMES Lord MELBOURNE. (*Viscount Melbourne.*)

GEORGE FRANCIS ROBERT Lord HARRIS.

CHARLES Lord COLCHESTER.

WILLIAM SCHOMBERG ROBERT Lord KER. (*Marquess of Lothian.*)

FRANCIS NATHANIEL Lord MINSTER. (*Marquess Conyngham.*)

JOHN Lord ORMONDE. (*Marquess of Ormonde.*)

FRANCIS Lord WEMYSS. (*Earl of Wemyss.*)

ROBERT Lord CLANBRASSILL. (*Earl of Roden.*)

ROBERT Lord KINGSTON. (*Earl of Kingston.*)

EDWARD MICHAEL Lord SILCHESTER. (*Earl of Longford.*)

GEORGE AUGUSTUS FEDERICK JOHN Lord GLENLYON. (*In another place as Earl Strange.*) (*Duke of Athol.*)

WILLIAM Lord MARYBOROUGH. (*Earl of Mornington.*)

JOHN Lord ORIEL. (*Viscount Massarene and Ferrard.*)

THOMAS HENRY Lord RAVENSWORTH.

THOMAS Lord DELAMERE.

JOHN GEORGE WELD Lord FORESTER.

JOHN JAMES Lord RAYLEIGH.

ULYSSES Lord DOWNES. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

NICHOLAS Lord BEXLEY.

ROBERT FRANCIS Lord GIFFORD.

PERCY CLINTON SYDNEY Lord PENSHURST. (*Viscount Strangford.*)

ULICK JOHN Lord SOMERHILL. (*Marquess of Clanricarde.*)

JAMES Lord WIGAN. (*Earl of Balcarres.*)

THOMAS Lord RANFURLY. (*Earl of Ranfurly.*)

GEORGE Lord DE TABLEY.

JOHN Lord WHARNCLIFFE.

WILLIAM Lord FEVERSHAM.

JOHN SINGLETON Lord LYNDHURST.

JAMES Lord FIFE. (*Earl of Fife.*)

JOHN HENRY Lord TENTERDEN.

WILLIAM CONYNGHAM Lord PLUNKET.

THOMAS Lord MELROS. (*Earl of Haddington.*)

HENRY RICHARD CHARLES Lord COWLEY.

WILLIAM Lord HEYTESBURY.

ARCHIBALD JOHN Lord ROSEBERY. (*Earl of Rosebery.*)

RICHARD Lord CLANWILLIAM. (*Earl of Clanwilliam.*)

EDWARD Lord SKELMERSDALE.

WILLIAM SAMUEL Lord WYNFORD.

HENRY Lord BROUGHAM and VAUX.

WILLIAM HENRY Lord KILMARNOCK. (*Earl of Erroll.*)

ARTHUR JAMES Lord FINGALL. (*Earl of Fingall.*)

CHARLES WILLIAM Lord SEFTON. (*Earl of Sefton.*)

NATHANIEL Lord CLEMENTS. (*Earl of Leitrim.*)

GEORGE WILLIAM FOX Lord ROSSIE. (*Lord Kinnaird.*)

THOMAS Lord KENLIS. (*Marquess of Headfort.*)

JOHN CHAMBRE Lord CHAWORTH. (*Earl of Meath.*)

CHARLES ADOLPHUS Lord DUNMORE. (*Earl of Dunmore.*)

ROBERT MONTGOMERY Lord HAMILTON. (*Lord Belhaven and Stenton.*)

JOHN HOBART Lord HOWDEN.

WILLIAM Lord PANMURE.

GEORGE WARWICK Lord POLTIMORE.

EDWARD PRICE Lord MOSTYN.

HENRY SPENCER Lord TEMPLEMORE.

WILLIAM LEWIS Lord DINORBEN.

VALENTINE BROWNE Lord CLONCURRY.

JAMES Lord DE SAUMEREZ.

FRANCIS GODOLPHIN Lord GODOLPHIN.

LUCIUS Lord HUNSDON. (*Viscount Falkland.*)

EDWARD GEOFFREY Lord STANLEY.

THOMAS Lord DENMAN.

ROBERT CAMPBELL Lord ABINGER.

PHILIP CHARLES Lord DE L'ISLE and DUDLEY.

WILLIAM BINGHAM Lord ASHBURTON.

CHARLES Lord GLENELG.

EDWARD JOHN Lord HATHERTON.

ARCHIBALD Lord WORLINGHAM. (*In another place as Earl of Gosford.*)

CHARLES CHRISTOPHER Lord COTTENHAM. (*In another place as Lord Chancellor.*)

Henry Lord Langdale.

Edward Berkeley Lord Portman.

Thomas Alexander Lord Lovat.

William Bateman Lord Bateman.

Francis William Lord Charlemont. (*In another place as Earl of Charlemont.*)

Francis Alexander Lord Kintore. (*Earl of Kintore.*)

Cornelius Lord Lismore. (*Viscount Lismore.*)

Henry Robert Lord Rossmore.

Robert Shapland Lord Carew.

William Francis Spencer Lord De Mauley.

John Lord Wrottesley.

Charles Lord Sudeley.

Paul Lord Methuen.

Frederic James Lord Beauvale. (*In another Place as Lord Melbourne.*) (*Viscount Melbourne.*)

Richard Wogan Lord Furnival. (*Lord Talbot of Malahide.*)

John Thomas Lord Stanley of Alderley.

Henry Lord Stuart de Decies.

Chandos Lord Leigh.

Paul Beilby Lord Wenlock.

Charles Lord Lurgan.

Nicholas William Lord Colborne.

Arthur Lord De Freyne.

James Lord Dunfermline.

Thomas Lord Monteagle of Brandon.

John Lord Seaton.

Edward Arthur Wellington Lord Keane.

John Lord Campbell.

John Lord Oxenfoord. (*Earl of Stair.*)

Valentine Lord Kenmare. (*Earl of Kenmare.*)

Charles Crespigny Lord Vivian.

John Lord Congleton.

Hugh Lord Gough.

Archibald Lord Acheson

Richard Lord Dartrey. (*Lord Cremorne.*)

Richard Bulkeley Philipps Lord Milford.

Edward John Lord Eddisbury

Mem.—*According to the Usage of Parliament, when the House appoints a Select Committee, the Lords appointed to serve upon it are named in the Order of their Rank, beginning with the Highest; and so, when the House sends a Committee to a Conference with the Commons, the Lord highest in Rank is called first, and the rest go forth in like Order: But when the Whole House is called over for any Purpose within the House, or for the Purpose of proceeding forth to Westminster Hall, or upon any public Solemnity, the Call begins invariably with the Junior Baron.*

LIST OF THE COMMONS.

LIST OF MEMBERS

Returned from the respective Counties, Cities, Towns, and Boroughs, to the *Fifteenth Parliament* of the United Kingdom of *Great Britain and Ireland*: Amended to the Opening of the Second Session on the 1st Day of February, 1849.

ABINGDON.
Sir Frederic Thesiger, knt.

ANDOVER.
Henry Beaumont Coles,
William Cubitt.

ANGLESEY.
Sir Richard Bulkeley Williams Bulkeley, bt.

ARUNDEL.
Hon. Henry Granville (Fitzalan Howard) Earl of Arundel and Surrey.

ASHBURTON.
Thomas Matheson.

ASHTON-UNDER-LINE.
Charles Hindley.

AYLESBURY.
Quintin Dick,
Hon. George (Nugent Grenville) Lord Nugent.

BANBURY.
Henry William Tancred.

BARNSTAPLE.
Richard Bremridge,
Hon. John William Fortescue.

BATH.
Hon. Anthony (Ashley Cooper) Lord Ashley,
Hon. Adam (Duncan) Viscount Duncan.

BEAUMARIS.
Hon. (George Augustus Frederick Paget) Lord G. A. F. Paget.

BEDFORDSHIRE.
Hon. John Hume (Cust) Viscount Alford,
Francis Charles Hastings Russell.

BEDFORD.
Sir Harry Verney, bt.,
Henry Stuart.

BERKSHIRE.
Robert Palmer,
Rt. hon. William (Keppel) Viscount Barrington,
Philip Pusey.

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED.
Matthew Forster,
John Campbell Renton,

BEVERLEY.
John Towneley,
Sackville Walter Lane Fox.

BEWDLEY.
Hon. William Drogo (Montague) Viscount Mandeville.

BIRMINGHAM.
George Frederick Muntz,
William Scholefield.

BLACKBURN.
John Hornby,
James Pilkington.

BODMIN.
James Wyld,
Henry Charles Lacy

BOLTON-LE-MOORS.
Stephen Blair.

BOSTON.
Sir James Duke, knt.,
Benjamin Bond Cabbell.

BRADFORD.
William Busfeild,
Thomas Perronet Thompson.

BRECKNOCKSHIRE.
Joseph Bailey.

BRECON.
John Lloyd Vaughan Watkins.

BRIDGENORTH.
Thos. Charlton Whitmore,
Sir Robert Pigot, bt.

BRIDGEWATER.
Charles Jn. Kemys Tynte,
Henry Broadwood.

BRIDPORT.
Alexander Dundas Ross Wishart Baillie Cochrane,
Thomas Alexander Mitchell.

BRIGHTHELMSTONE.
George Richard Pechell,
Hon. (Alfred Hervey) Lord A. Hervey.

BRISTOL.
Hon. Francis Henry Fitzhardinge Berkeley,
Philip William Skynner Miles.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.
Caledon George Du Pré,
Hon. Charles Compton Cavendish,
Benjamin Disraeli.

BUCKINGHAM.
Hon. Richard Plantagenet Campbell (Chandos-Grenville) Marquess of Chandos,
John Hall.

BURY.
Richard Walker.

BURY ST. EDMUND'S.
Rt. hon. Frederick William (Hervey) Earl Jermyn,
Edward Herbert Bunbury.

CALNE.
Hon. Henry Petty (Fitzmaurice) Earl of Shelburne.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE.
Hon. Eliot Thomas Yorke,
Richard Greaves Townley,
Hon. (George John Manners) Lord G. J. Manners.

CAMBRIDGE (UNIVERSITY).
Hon. Charles Ewan Law,
Rt. hon. Henry Goulburn.

CAMBRIDGE.
Robert Alexander Shafto Adair,
Hon. William Frederick Campbell.

CANTERBURY.
Hon. (Albert Denison Conyngham) Lord A. D. Conyngham,
Hon. George Augustus Frederick Percy Sydney Smythe.

CARDIFF.
Rt. hon. John Nicholl.

CARDIGANSHIRE.
William Edward Powell.

CARDIGAN.

CARLISLE.
William Nicholson Hodgson,
Philip Henry Howard.

CARMARTHENSHIRE.
Hon. George Rice Rice Trevor,
David Arthur Saunders Davies.

CARMARTHEN.
David Morris.

CARNARVONSHIRE.
Hon. Edward Gordon Douglas Pennant.

CARNARVON.
William Bulkeley Hughes.

CHATHAM.
Rt. hon. George Stevens (Byng) Viscount Enfield.

CHELTENHAM.
Charles Lennox Grenville Berkeley.

CHESHIRE.
(*Northern Division.*)
William Tatton Egerton,
George Cornwall Legh.

(*Southern Division.*)
Sir Philip de Malpas Grey Egerton, bt.,
John Tollemache.

CHESTER.
Hon. Hugh Lupus (Grosvenor) Earl Grosvenor,
Sir John Jervis, knt.

CHICHESTER.
John Abel Smith,
Hon. (George Charles Henry Gordon Lennox) Lord G. C. H. G. Lennox.

CHIPPENHAM.
Joseph Neeld,
Henry George Boldero.

CHRISTCHURCH.
Hon. Edward Alfred John Harris.

CIRENCESTER.
John Randolph Mullings,
Hon. George Augustus Frederick (Villiers) Viscount Villiers.

CLITHEROE.
Matthew Wilson.

COCKERMOUTH.
Henry Aglionby Aglionby,
Edward Horsman.

COLCHESTER.
Sir George Henry Smyth, bt.,
Joseph Alfred Hardcastle.

CORNWALL.
(*Eastern Division.*)
William Henry Pole Carew,
Thomas James Agar Robartes.

(*Western Division.*)
Edward William Wynne Pendarves,
Sir Charles Lemon, bt.

COVENTRY.
Rt. hon. Edward Ellice,
George James Turner.

CRICKLADE.
John Neeld,
Ambrose Lethbridge Goddard.

CUMBERLAND.
(*Eastern Division.*)
Hon. Charles Wentworth George Howard,
William Marshall.

(*Western Division.*)
Edward Stanley,
Henry Lowther.

DARTMOUTH.
George Moffatt.

DENBIGHSHIRE.
Sir Watkin Williams Wynn,
Hon. William Bagot.

DENBIGH.
Frederick Richard West.

DERBYSHIRE.
(*Northern Division.*)
Hon. George Henry Cavendish,
William Evans.

(*Southern Division.*)
Edward Miller Mundy,
Charles Robert Colville.

DERBY.
Michael Thomas Bass,
Lawrence Heyworth.

DEVIZES.
George Heneage Walker Heneage,
James Bucknall Bucknall Estcourt.

DEVONPORT.
Henry Tufnell,
Sir John Romilly, kt.

DEVONSHIRE.
(*Northern Division.*)
Sir Thomas Dyke Acland, bt.,
Lewis William Buck.

(*Southern Division.*)
Sir John Buller Yarde Buller, bt.

DORCHESTER.
Rt. hon. George Lionel Dawson Damer,
Henry Gerard Sturt.

DORSETSHIRE.
George Bankes,
Henry Ker Seymer,
John Floyer.

DOVOR.
Edward Royd Rice,
Rt. hon. Sir George Clerk, bt.

DROITWICH.
Sir John Somerset Pakington, bt.

DUDLEY.
John Benbow.

DURHAM.
(*Northern Division.*)
Robert Duncombe Shafto,
Hon. George Henry Robert Charles (Vane) Viscount Seaham.

(*Southern Division.*)
Hon. (Harry George Vane) Lord H. G. Vane,
James Farrer.

DURHAM (CITY).
Thomas Colpitts Granger,
Henry John Spearman.

ESSEX.
(*Northern Division.*)
Sir John Tyssen Tyrell, bt.,
William Beresford.

(*Southern Division.*)
Thomas William Bramston,
Sir Edward North Buxton, bt.

EVESHAM.
Rt. hon. (Arthur Marcus Cecil Hill), Lord A. M. C. Hill,
Sir Henry Pollard Willoughby, bt.

EXETER.
Sir John Thomas Buller Duckworth, bt.,
Edward Divett.

EYE.
Sir Edward Kerrison, bt.

FINSBURY.
Thomas Wakley,
Thos. Slingsby Duncombe.

FLINTSHIRE.
Hon. Edward Mostyn Lloyd Mostyn.

FLINT.
Sir John Hanmer, bt.

FROME.
Hon. Robert Edward Boyle.

GATESHEAD.
William Hutt.

GLAMORGANSHIRE.
Hon. Edward Richard Wyndham (Wyndham Quin) Viscount Adare,
Christopher Rice Mansel Talbot.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE.
(Eastern Division.)
Christopher William Codrington,
Hon. Henry Charles Fitzroy (Somerset) Marquess of Worcester.

(Western Division.)
Robert Blagden Hale,
Hon. George Charles Grantley Fitzhardinge Berkeley.

GLOUCESTER.
Henry Thomas Hope,
Hon. Maurice Frederick Fitzhardinge Berkeley.

GRANTHAM.
Glynne Earle Welby,
Hon. Frederick James Tollemache.

GREENWICH.
James Whitley Deans Dundas,
Edward George Barnard.

GRIMSBY (GREAT).
Edward Heneage.

GUILDFORD.
Henry Currie,
Ross Donnelly Mangles.

HALIFAX.
Henry Edwards,
Rt. hon. Sir Charles Wood, bt.

HAMPSHIRE.
(Northern Division.)
Rt. hon. Charles Shaw Lefevre,
Sir William Heathcote, bt.

(Southern Division.)
Hon. (Charles Wellesley) Lord C. Wellesley,
Henry Combe Compton.

HARWICH.
John Bagshaw,
Rt. hon. Sir John Cam Hobhouse, bt.

HASTINGS.
Robert Hollond,
Musgrave Briscoe.

HAVERFORDWEST.
John Evans.

HELSTON.
Sir Richard Rawlinson Vyvyan, bt.

HEREFORDSHIRE.
Joseph Bailey, jun.,
Francis Richard Haggitt,
George Cornewall Lewis.

HEREFORD.
Sir Robert Price, bt.,
Henry Morgan Clifford.

HERTFORDSHIRE.
Sir Henry Meux, bt.,
Thomas Plumer Halsey,
Thomas Brand.

HERTFORD.
Hon. Philip Henry (Stanhope) Viscount Mahon,
Hon. William Francis Cowper.

HONITON.
Joseph Locke,
Sir James Weir Hogg, bt.

HORSHAM.
Hon. (Edward Howard) Lord E. Howard.

HUDDERSFIELD.
William Rookes Crompton Stansfield.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE.
Edward Fellowes,
George Thornhill.

HUNTINGDON.
Jonathan Peel,
Thomas Baring.

HYTHE.
Edward Drake Brockman.

IPSWICH.
John Chevallier Cobbold,
Hugh Edward Adair.

KENDAL.
George Carr Glyn.

KENT.
(Eastern Division.)
John Pemberton Plumptre,
William Deedes.

(Western Division.)
Sir Edmund Filmer, bt.,
Thomas Law Hodges.

KIDDERMINSTER.
Richard Godson.

KING'S LYNN.
Hon. Edward Henry Stanley,
Hon. Robert (Jocelyn) Viscount Jocelyn.

KINGSTON-UPON-HULL.
James Clay.

KNARESBOROUGH.
Hon. William Saunders Sebright Lascelles,
Joshua Proctor Westhead.

LAMBETH.
Charles Pearson,
Rt. hon. Charles Tennyson D'Eyncourt.

LANCASHIRE.
(Northern Division.)
John Wilson Patten,
James Heywood.

(Southern Division.)
William Brown,
Alexander Henry.

LANCASTER.
Robert Baynes Armstrong,
Thomas Greene.

LAUNCESTON.
William Bowles.

LEEDS.
William Beckett,
James Garth Marshall.

LEICESTERSHIRE.
(Northern Division.)
Hon. (Charles Henry Somerset Manners) Lord C. H. S. Manners,
Edward Basil Farnham.

(Southern Division.)
Sir Henry Halford, bt.,
Charles William Packe.

LEICESTER.
Richard Harris,
John Ellis.

LEOMINSTER.
George Arkwright,

LEWES.
Hon. Henry Fitzroy,
Robert Perfect.

LICHFIELD.
Hon. (Alfred Henry Paget) Lord A. H. Paget,
Hon. Thomas William (Anson) Viscount Anson.

LINCOLNSHIRE.
(*Parts of Lindsey.*)
Robert Adam Christopher,
Sir Montague John Cholmeley, bt.

(*Parts of Kesteven and Holland.*)
Hon. William Alleyne (Cecil) Lord Burghley,
Sir John Trollope, bt.

LINCOLN.
Charles De Laet Waldo Sibthorp,
Thomas Benjamin Hobhouse.

LISKEARD.
Richard Budden Crowder.

LIVERPOOL.
Edward Cardwell,
Sir Thomas Bernard Birch, bt.

LONDON.
Rt. hon. (John Russell) Lord J. Russell,
James Pattison,
Lionel Nathan (Baron) De Rothschild,
John Masterman.

LUDLOW.
Henry Bayley Clive,
Henry Salwey.

LYME REGIS.
Thomas Neville Abdy.

LYMINGTON.
Hon. George Thomas Keppel,
William Alexander Mackinnon.

MACCLESFIELD.
John Brocklehurst, jun.,
John Williams.

MAIDSTONE.
Alexander James Beresford Hope,
George Dodd.

MALDON.
David Waddington,
Thomas Barrett Lennard.

MALMESBURY.
Hon. James Kenneth Howard.

MALTON.
John Walbanke Childers,
John Evelyn Denison.

MANCHESTER.
Rt. hon. Thomas Milner Gibson,
John Bright.

MARLBOROUGH.
Hon. (Ernest Augustus Charles Brudenell Bruce) Lord E. A. C. B. Bruce,
Henry Bingham Baring.

MARLOW (GREAT).
Thomas Peers Williams,
Brownlow William Knox.

MARYLEBONE.
Hon. (Dudley Coutts Stuart) Lord D. C. Stuart,
Sir Benjamin Hall, bt.

MERIONETHSHIRE.
Richard Richards.

MERTHYR TYDVIL.
Sir Josiah John Guest, bt.

MIDDLESEX.
Rt. hon. (Robert Grosvenor) Lord R. Grosvenor,
Ralph Bernal Osborne.

MIDHURST.
Spencer Horatio Walpole.

MONMOUTHSHIRE.
Charles Octavius Swinnerton Morgan,
Edward Arthur Somerset.

MONMOUTH.
Reginald James Blewitt.

MONTGOMERYSHIRE.
Rt. hon. Charles Watkin Williams Wynn.

MONTGOMERY.
David Pugh.

MORPETH.
Hon. Edward George Granville Howard.

NEWARK-UPON-TRENT.
Hon. John Henry Thomas Manners Sutton,
John Stuart.

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME.
Samuel Christy,
William Jackson.

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE.
William Ord,
Thomas Emerson Headlam.

NEWPORT.
William Henry Chicheley Plowden,
Charles Wykeham Martin.

NORFOLK.
(*Eastern Division.*)
Henry Negus Burroughes,
Edmund Wodehouse.

(*Western Division.*)
William Bagge,
Hon. Edward Keppell Wentworth Coke.

NORTHALLERTON.
William Battye Wrightson.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.
(*Northern Division.*)
Thomas Philip Maunsell,
Stafford Augustus O'Brien Stafford.

(*Southern Division.*)
Sir Charles Knightley, bt.,
Richard Henry Richard Howard Vyse.

NORTHAMPTON.
Raikes Currie,
Rt. Hon. Robert Vernon Smith.

NORTHUMBERLAND.
(*Northern Division.*)
Rt. hon. Sir George Grey, bt.,
Hon. Charles (Bennett) Lord Ossulston.

(*Southern Division.*)
Matthew Bell,
Savile Craven Henry Ogle.

NORWICH.
Samuel Morton Peto,
Hon. Arthur Richard (Wellesley) Marquess of Douro.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.
(*Northern Division.*)
Thomas Houldsworth,
Hon. (Henry William Cavendish Bentinck) Lord H. W. C. Bentinck.

(*Southern Division.*)
Lancelot Rolleston,
Thomas Blackburne Thornton Hildyard.

NOTTINGHAM.
John Walter,
Feargus O'Connor.

OLDHAM.
William Johnson Fox,
John Duncuft.

OXFORDSHIRE.
Hon. Montague (Bertie) Lord Norreys,
George Granville Vernon Harcourt,
Joseph Warner Henley.

OXFORD (CITY).
James Haughton Langston,
William Page Wood.

OXFORD (UNIVERSITY).
Sir Robert Harry Inglis, bt.,
Rt. Hon. William Ewart Gladstone.

PEMBROKESHIRE.
Hon. John Frederick Vaughan (Campbell) Viscount Emlyn.

PEMBROKE.
Sir John Owen, bt.

PENRYN AND FALMOUTH.
Howell Gwyn,
Francis Mowatt.

PETERBOROUGH.
Hon. George Wentworth Fitzwilliam,
William George Cavendish.

PETERSFIELD.
Sir William George Hylton Jolliffe, bt.

PLYMOUTH.
Hon. Hugh (Fortescue) Viscount Ebrington,
Roundel Palmer.

PONTEFRACT.
Samuel Martin,
Richard Monckton Milnes.

POOLE.
George Richard Robinson,
Sir George Richard Philips, bt.

PORTSMOUTH.

Sir George Thomas Staunton, bt.

PRESTON.
Sir George Strickland, bt.,
Charles Pasco Grenfell.

RADNORSHIRE.
Sir John Benn Walsh, bt.

RADNOR (NEW).
Rt. Hon. Sir Thomas Frankland Lewis, bt.

READING.
Francis Pigott,
Thomas Noon Talfourd.

REIGATE.
Hon. Thomas Somers Cocks.

RETFORD (EAST).
Hon. Arthur Duncombe,
Rt. Hon. George Edward Arundell (Monckton-Arundell) Viscount Galway.

RICHMOND.
Henry Rich,
Marmaduke Wyvill, jun.

RIPON.
Rt. hon. Sir James Robert Graham, bt.,
Hon. Edwin Lascelles.

ROCHDALE.
William Sharman Crawford.

ROCHESTER.
Ralph Bernal,
Thomas Twisden Hodges.

RUTLANDSHIRE.
Gilbert John Heathcote,
Hon. Gerard James Noel.

RYE.
Herbert Mascall Curteis.

ST. ALBAN'S.
Alexander Raphael,
George William John Repton.

ST. IVES.
Hon. (William John Frederic) Lord W. J. F. Powlett.

SALFORD.
Joseph Brotherton.

SALISBURY.
William James Chaplin,
Charles Baring Wall.

SALOP, OR SHROPSHIRE.
(Northern Division.)
William Ormsby Gore,
John Whitehall Dod.

(Southern Division.)
Hon. Robert Henry Clive,
Hon. Orlando George Chas. (Bridgeman) Viscount Newport.

SANDWICH.
Hon. (Clarence Edward Paget) Lord C. E. Paget,
Charles William Grenfell.

SCARBOROUGH.
Sir John Vanden Bempde Johnstone, bt.,
Hon. George Augustus Constantine Henry (Phipps) Earl of Mulgrave.

SHAFTESBURY.
Richard Brinsley Sheridan.

SHEFFIELD.
John Parker,
Henry George Ward.

SHIELDS (SOUTH).
John Twizell Wawn.

SHOREHAM (NEW).
Sir Charles Merrik Burrell, bt.,
Charles Goring.

SHREWSBURY.
Edward Holmes Baldock,
Robert Aglionby Slaney.

SOMERSETSHIRE.
(Eastern Division.)
William Miles,
William Pinney.

(Western Division.)
Charles Aaron Moody,
Sir Alexander Hood, bt.

SOUTHAMPTON.
Alexander James Edmund Cockburn,
Brodie M'Ghie Willcox.

SOUTHWARK.
John Humphery,
Sir William Molesworth, bt.

STAFFORDSHIRE.
(Northern Division.)
Charles Bowyer Adderley,
Hon. George Granville Francis (Egerton) Viscount Brackley.

(Southern Division.)

Hon. George Anson.

STAFFORD.
David Urquhart,
Thomas Sidney.

STAMFORD.
Hon. Charles Cecil John (Manners) Marquess of Granby,
Rt. hon. John Charles Herries.

STOCKPORT.
James Heald,
James Kershaw.

STOKE-UPON-TRENT.
John Lewis Ricardo,
William Taylor Copeland.

STROUD.
William Henry Stanton,
George Poulett Scrope.

SUFFOLK.
(Eastern Division.)
Rt. Hon. Frederick (Thellusson) Lord Rendlesham,
Edward Sherlock Gooch.

(Western Division.)
Harry Spencer Waddington,
Philip Bennet, jun.

SUNDERLAND.
Sir Hedworth Williamson, bt.,
George Hudson.

SURREY.

(Eastern Division.)

Hon. Peter John Locke King,
Thomas Alcock.

(Western Division.)

William Joseph Denison,
Henry Drummond.

SUSSEX.

(Eastern Division.)

Augustus Elliott Fuller,
Charles Hay Frewen.

(Western Division.)

Hon. Charles Henry (Gordon Lennox) Earl of March,
Richard Prime.

SWANSEA.

John Henry Vivian.

TAMWORTH.

Rt. hon. Sir Robert Peel, bt.,
John Townsend.

TAUNTON.

Rt. hon. Henry Labouchere,
Sir Thomas Edward Colebrooke, bt.

TAVISTOCK.

Hon. Edward Southwell Russell,
John Salusbury Trelawny.

TEWKESBURY.

John Martin,
Humphrey Brown.

THETFORD.

Hon. William Henry (Fitzroy) Earl of Euston,
Hon. Francis Baring.

THIRSK.

John Bell.

TIVERTON.

John Heathcoat,
Rt. hon. Henry John (Temple) Viscount Palmerston.

TOTNESS.

Hon. Edward Adolphus (Seymour) Lord Seymour,
Charles Barry Baldwin.

TOWER HAMLETS.

George Thompson,
Sir William Clay, bt.

TRURO.

John Ennis Vivian,
Humphrey Willyams.

TYNEMOUTH.

Ralph William Grey.

WAKEFIELD.

George Sandars.

WALLINGFORD.

William Seymour Blackstone.

WALSALL.

Hon. Edward Richard Littleton.

WAREHAM.

John Samuel Wanley Sawbridge Erle Drax.

WARRINGTON.

Gilbert Greenall.

WARWICKSHIRE.

(Northern Division.)

Charles Newdigate Newdegate,
Richard Spooner.

(Southern Division.)

Evelyn John Shirley,
Hon. George Guy (Greville) Lord Brooke.

WARWICK.

William Collins,
Sir Charles Eurwicke Douglas, knt.

WELLS.

Rt. hon. William Goodenough Hayter,
Richard Blakemore.

WENLOCK.

Hon. George Cecil Weld Forester,
James Milnes Gaskell.

WESTBURY.

James Wilson.

WESTMINSTER.

Sir De Lacy Evans, K.C.B.,
Charles Lushington.

WESTMORELAND.

Hon. Henry Cecil Lowther,
William Thompson.

WEYMOUTH AND MELCOMBE REGIS.

William Lockyer Freestun,
Hon. Frederick William Child Villiers.

WHITBY.

Robert Stephenson.

WHITEHAVEN.

Robert Charles Hildyard.

WIGAN.

Hon. James Lindsey,
Ralph Anthony Thicknesse.

WIGHT (ISLE OF).

John Simeon.

WILTON.

Hon. James Charles Herbert Welbore Ellis (Agar) Viscount Somerton.

WILTSHIRE.

(Northern Division.)

Walter Long,
Thomas Henry Sutton Sotheron.

(Southern Division.)

Rt. hon. Sidney Herbert,
John Benett.

WINCHESTER.

John Bonham Carter,
Sir James Buller East, bt.

WINDSOR.

George Alexander Reid,
Hon. (John Hay) Lord J. Hay.

WOLVERHAMPTON.

Hon. Charles Pelham Villiers,
Thomas Thornely.

WOODSTOCK.

Hon. John Winston (Spencer Churchill) Marquess of Blandford.

WORCESTERSHIRE.

(Eastern Division.)

George Rushout,
John Hodgetts Hodgetts Foley.

(Western Division.)

Hon. Henry Beauchamp Lygon,
Frederick Winn Knight.

WORCESTER.

Osman Ricardo,
Francis Rufford.

WYCOMBE (CHIPPING).

George Henry Dashwood,
Martin Tucker Smith.

YARMOUTH (GREAT).

Charles Edward Rumbold,
Joseph Sandars.

YORKSHIRE.

(North Riding.)

Edward Stillingfleet Cayley,
Hon. Octavius Duncombe.

(East Riding.)

Henry Broadley,
Rt. hon. Beaumont (Hotham) Lord Hotham.

(West Riding.)

Edmund Becket Denison,
Richard Cobden.

YORK.

William Mordaunt Edward Milner,
John George Smyth.

SCOTLAND.

ABERDEENSHIRE.
Hon. William Gordon.

ABERDEEN.
Alexander Dingwall Fordyce.

ARGYLLSHIRE.
Duncan MacNeil.

AYRSHIRE.
Alexander Oswald.

AYR, &c.
Hon. (Patrick James Herbert Crichton Stuart) Lord P. J. H. C. Stuart.

BANFFSHIRE.
James Duff.

BERWICKSHIRE.
Hon. Francis Scott.

BUTESHIRE.
Rt. hon. James Archibald Stuart Wortley.

CAITHNESS-SHIRE.
George Trail.

CLACKMANNAN AND KINROSS SHIRES.
William Morrison.

CUPAR, &c.
Edward Ellice.

DUMBARTONSHIRE.
Alexander Smollett.

DUMFRIES-SHIRE.
Hon. Archibald William (Douglas) Viscount Drumlanrig.

DUMFRIES, &c.
William Ewart.

DUNDEE.
George Duncan.

DYSART, &c.
Robert Ferguson.

EDINBURGHSHIRE.
Sir John Hope, bt.

EDINBURGH.
Charles Cowan,
William Gibson Craig.

ELGINSHIRE AND NAIRNE.
Charles Lennox Cumming Bruce.

ELGIN, &c.
George Skene Duff.

FIFESHIRE.
John Fergus.

FORFARSHIRE.
Hon. (John Frederick Gordon Hallyburton) Lord J. F. Gordon.

GLASGOW.
John M'Gregor,
Alexander Hastie.

GREENOCK.
Hon. William Hugh (Kynynmond) Viscount Melgund.

HADDINGTONSHIRE.
Hon. Francis Charteris.

HADDINGTON, &c.
Sir Henry Robert Ferguson Davie, bt.

INVERNESS-SHIRE.
Henry James Baillie.

INVERNESS, &c.
Alexander Matheson.

KINCARDINESHIRE.
Hon. Hugh Arbuthnott.

KIRKCUDBRIGHT.
Thomas Maitland.

KIRKWALL, WICK, &c.
James Loch.

LANARKSHIRE.
William Lockhart.

LEITH, &c.
Rt. hon. Andrew Rutherfurd.

LINLITHGOWSHIRE.
George Dundas.

LINLITHGOW, &c.
Rt. hon. Henry (Pelham Fynes Pelham Clinton) Earl of Lincoln.

MONTROSE, &c.
Joseph Hume.

ORKNEY AND SHETLAND.
Arthur Anderson.

PAISLEY.
Archibald Hastie.

PEEBLES-SHIRE.
William Forbes Mackenzie.

PERTHSHIRE.
Henry Home Drummond.

PERTH.
Rt. hon. Fox Maule.

RENFREWSHIRE.
William Mure.

RENFREW, &c.
Hon. Edward Pleydell Bouverie.

ROSS AND CROMARTY-SHIRES.
James Matheson.

ROXBURGHSHIRE.
Hon. John Edmund Elliot.

SELKIRKSHIRE.
Allan Eliott Lockhart.

STIRLINGSHIRE.
William Forbes.

STIRLING, &c.
John Benjamin Smith.

SUTHERLANDSHIRE.
Sir David Dundas, Knt.

WIGTONSHIRE.
John Dalrymple.

WIGTON, &c.
Sir John MacTaggart, bt.

IRELAND.

ANTRIM.
Nathaniel Alexander,
Sir Edmund Charles Workman Macnaghten, bt.,

ARMAGH.
Sir William Verner, bt.,
James Molyneux Caulfield.

ARMAGH (CITY).
John Dawson Rawdon.

ATHLONE.
William Keogh.

BANDON BRIDGE.
Hon. Francis (Bernard) Viscount Bernard.

BELFAST.
Robert James Tennent,
Hon. (John Ludford Chichester) Lord J. L. Chichester.

CARLOW.
Henry Bruen,
William Bunbury MacClintock Bunbury.

CARLOW (BOROUGH).
John Sadleir.

CARRICKFERGUS.
Hon. Wellington Henry Stapleton Cotton.

CASHELL.
Timothy O'Brien.

CAVAN.
Sir John Young, bt.,
Hon. James Pierce Maxwell.

CLARE.
Sir Lucius O'Brien,
William Nugent M'Namara.

CLONMEL.
Hon. Cecil John Lawless.

COLERAINE.
John Boyd.

CORK COUNTY.
Edmund Burke Roche,
Maurice Power.

CORK (CITY).
William Fagan,
Daniel Callaghan.

DONEGAL.
Sir Edmund Samuel Hayes, bt.

DOWNSHIRE.

Rt. hon. Frederick William Robert (Stewart) Viscount Castlereagh,
Hon. (Arthur Edwin Hill) Lord A. E. Hill.

DOWNPATRICK.

Richard Ker.

DROGHEDA.

Rt. hon. Sir William Meredyth Somerville, bt.

DUBLIN.

James Hans Hamilton,
Thomas Edward Taylor.

DUBLIN (CITY).

Edward Grogan,
John Reynolds.

DUBLIN (UNIVERSITY).

George Alex. Hamilton,
Joseph Napier.

DUNDALK.

William Torrens McCullagh.

DUNGANNON.

Hon. Thomas (Knox) Viscount Northland.

DUNGARVON.

Rt. hon. Richard Lalor Sheil.

ENNIS.

James Patrick O'Gorman Mahon (The O'Gorman Mahon).

ENNISKILLEN.

Hon. Henry Arthur Cole.

FERMANAGH.

Mervyn Edward Archdall,
Sir Arth. Brinsley Brooke, bt.

GALWAY.

Sir Thomas John Burke, bt.,
Christopher St. George.

GALWAY (BOROUGH).

Martin Joseph Blake,
Anthony O'Flaherty.

KERRY.

Henry Arthur Herbert,
Morgan John O'Connell.

KILDARE.

Hon. Charles William (Fitzgerald) Marquess of Kildare,
Richard Southwell Bourke.

KILKENNY.

John Greene,
Pierce Somerset Butler.

KILKENNY (BOROUGH).

Michael Sullivan.

KING'S (COUNTY).

Sir Andrew Armstrong, bt.,
Hon. John Craven Westenra.

KINSALE.

Benjamin Hawes.

LEITRIM.

Edward King Tenison,
Hon. Charles Skeffington Clements.

LIMERICK.

William Monsell,
William Smith O'Brien.

LIMERICK (CITY).

John O'Connell,
John O'Brien.

LISBURN.

Sir Horace Beauchamp Seymour, knt.

LONDONDERRY.

Theobald Jones,
Thomas Bateson.

LONDONDERRY (CITY).

Sir Robert Alexander Ferguson, bt.

LONGFORD.

Samuel Winsley Blackall,
Richard Maxwell Fox.

LOUTH.

Rich. Montesquieu Bellew,
Chichester Fortescue.

MALLOW.

Sir Charles Denham Orlando Jephson Norreys, bt.

MAYO.

George Henry Moore,
Robert Dillon Browne.

MEATH.

Matthew Elias Corbally,
Henry Grattan.

MONAGHAN.

Charles Powell Leslie,
Hon. Thomas Vesey Dawson.

NEWRY.

Hon. Francis Jack (Needham) Viscount Newry and Morne.

PORTARLINGTON.

Francis Plunket Dunne.

QUEEN'S COUNTY.

Hon. Thomas Vesey,
John Wilson Fitzpatrick.

ROSCOMMON.

Fitzstephen French,
Oliver Dowell John Grace.

ROSS (NEW).

John Hyacinth Talbot.

SLIGO.

William Richard Ormsby Gore,
John Ffolliott.

SLIGO (BOROUGH).

John Patrick Somers.

TIPPERARY.

Nicholas Maher,
Francis Scully.

TRALEE.

Maurice O'Connell.

TYRONE.

Rt. hon. Henry Thomas Lowry Corry,
Hon. (Claud Hamilton) Lord C. Hamilton.

WATERFORD.

Nicholas Maher Power,
Robert Keating.

WATERFORD (CITY).

Thomas Meagher,
Sir Henry Winston Barron, bt.

WESTMEATH.

William Henry Magan,
Sir Percy Fitzgerald Nugent, bt.

WEXFORD.

James Fagan,
Hamilton Knox Grogan Morgan.

WEXFORD (BOROUGH).

John Thomas Devereux.

WICKLOW.

Hon. William Thomas Spencer (Wentworth Fitzwilliam) Viscount Milton,
Sir Ralph Howard.

YOUGHALL.

Thomas Chisholm Anstey.

HANSARD'S

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

IN THE

Second Session of the *Fifteenth Parliament* of
the United Kingdom of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*,
appointed to meet 2 November, 1848, and from thence
continued till 1 February, 1849, in the Twelfth Year
of the Reign of

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

FIRST VOLUME OF THE SESSION.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, February 1, 1849.

Minutes.] *Took the Oaths.*—Several Lords.
Sat first.—The Earl of Carlisle, after the Death of his Father; The Lord Auckland, after the Death of his Brother.
Public Bills.—1ª Select Vestries.

MEETING OF PARLIAMENT.

The Parliament, which had been prorogued successively from the 5th September, to the 2nd November, to the 19th December, and to the 1st February, met this day for despatch of business.

The Session was opened by the QUEEN in Person. Being seated on the Throne, and the Commons being at the Bar, with their Speaker, HER MAJESTY was pleased to make a most gracious Speech to both Houses of Parliament, as follows:—

"*My Lords, and Gentlemen,*

"The Period being arrived at which the business of Parliament is usually resumed, I have called you together for the Discharge of your important Duties.

"It is satisfactory to Me to be enabled to state, that both in the North and in the South of *Europe* the contending Parties have consented to a Suspension of Arms for the Purpose of negotiating Terms of Peace.

"The Hostilities carried on in the Island of *Sicily* were attended with Circumstances so revolting that the *British* and *French* Admirals were impelled by Motives of Humanity to interpose, and to stop the further Effusion of Blood.

"I have availed Myself of the Interval thus obtained to propose, in conjunction with *France*, to the King of *Naples*, an Arrangement calculated to produce a permanent Settlement of

Affairs in *Sicily*. The Negotiation on these Matters is still pending.

"It has been My anxious Endeavour, in offering My good Offices to the various contending Powers, to prevent the Extension of the Calamities of War, and to lay the Foundations for lasting and honourable Peace. It is My constant Desire to maintain with all Foreign States the most friendly Relations.

"As soon as the Interests of the Public Service will permit, I shall direct the Papers connected with these Transactions to be laid before you.

"A Rebellion of a formidable Character has broken out in the *Punjaub*, and the Governor General of *India* has been compelled, for the Preservation of the Peace of the Country, to assemble a considerable Force, which is now engaged in Military Operations against the Insurgents; but the Tranquillity of *British India* has not been affected by these unprovoked Disturbances.

"I again commend to your Attention the Restrictions imposed on Commerce by the Navigation Laws.

"If you shall find that these Laws are in whole or in part unnecessary for the Maintenance of our Maritime Power, while they fetter Trade and Industry, you will no doubt deem it right to repeal or modify their Provisions.

"*Gentlemen of the House of Commons,*

"I have directed the Estimates for the Service of the Year to be laid before you; they will be framed with the most anxious Attention to a wise Economy.

"The present Aspect of Affairs has enabled Me to make large Reductions on the Estimates of last Year.

"*My Lords, and Gentlemen,*

"I observe with Satisfaction that this Portion of the United Kingdom has remained tranquil amidst the Convulsions which have disturbed so many Parts of *Europe*.

"The Insurrection in *Ireland* has not been renewed, but a Spirit of Disaffection still exists; and I am compelled, to My great Regret, to ask for a Continuance, for a limited Time, of those Powers which in the last Session you deemed necessary for the Preservation of the Public Tranquillity.

"I have great Satisfaction in stating that Commerce is reviving from those Shocks which at the Commencement of last Session I had to deplore.

"The Condition of the Manufacturing Districts is likewise more encouraging than it has been for a considerable Period.

"It is also gratifying to Me to observe that the State of the Revenue is one of progressive Improvement.

"I have to lament, however, that another Failure in the Potato Crop has caused very severe Distress in some Parts of *Ireland*.

"The Operation of the Laws for the Relief of the Poor in *Ireland* will properly be a Subject of your Inquiry; and any Measures by which those Laws may be beneficially amended, and the Condition of the People may be improved, will receive My cordial Assent.

"It is with Pride and Thankfulness that I advert to the loyal Spirit of My People, and that Attachment to our Institutions which has animated them during a Period of Commercial Difficulty, deficient Production of Food, and Political Revolution.

"I LOOK to the Protection of Almighty God for Favour in our continued Progress; and I trust that you will assist Me in upholding the Fabric of the Constitution, founded as it is upon the Principles of Freedom and of Justice."

HER MAJESTY then retired.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO THE SPEECH.

The Queen's Speech having being *reported* by the Lord Chancellor,

EARL BRUCE, in rising to propose to their Lordships to adopt an humble Address in answer to the gracious Speech which had that day been delivered from the Throne, said, he felt the necessity of soliciting at their Lordships' hands the utmost amount of their indulgence. He could assure their Lordships no one ever rose in that House under greater feelings of embarrassment. If noble Lords who had had experience in debate often felt themselves obliged to ask for such indulgence, when placed in the position he then occupied, how much more incumbent must it be upon him, who had never before had the honour of addressing their Lordships, and who, moreover, had never had the advantage of speaking in the other House of Parliament, to ask their Lordships to extend to him the greatest indulgence, patience, and forbearance, while he ventured to address to them a few remarks upon some of the topics contained in Her Majesty's Speech. He would, indeed, willingly have forborne any observation at all, and have proceeded at once to move the Address in answer, were it not that, pursuing so unusual a course, he might appear to be acting disrespectfully towards their Lordships, and perhaps in some degree towards Her Majesty, to whose gracious Speech the Address was intended as a reply. The foreign relations of the country formed the first topic adverted to in the Speech. It was scarcely needful for him to assure their Lordships that he fully shared in those feelings of gratification which had no doubt been excited in that House by the declaration of Her Majesty's constant desire to maintain the most friendly relations with every foreign State. Her Majesty was pleased to inform them that both in the north and south of Europe negotiations were going on having for their object a settlement of peace between countries and parties lately involved in war. Amongst these, the case of Sicily had been more particularly referred to. It was impossible that this country should not feel a deep interest in the affairs of that island, when the terms in which, during the period between 1806 and 1815, we stood towards it were considered; but although he, in common with every Englishman, must feel great sympathy with the inhabitants of that country, he confessed he could not feel sorry to be informed that it was not on that ground, but rather on the ground of humanity that the officer in command of Her Majesty's naval forces in that part of the world had been impelled, in conjunction with the French admiral, to interpose to prevent the further effusion of blood, and to prevent the continuance of those horrible atrocities which were known to have taken place in that island. He believed that the deeds which had been perpetrated, and which had induced the admiral to move, were of such a nature, even in the estimation of those who were used to the scenes which a state of warfare produced, that they could not witness them without feelings of the utmost horror and dismay; and the officers of both nations had felt constrained by a sense of duty to interfere to prevent a recurrence of them. It seemed very desirable that the inverval thus obtained for negotiation for peace should not be neglected. It would not, he considered, be right, while these negotiations were pending, to refer more at length to the subject, especially as he felt, in common with their Lordships, that he was but imperfectly informed upon the subject. It would be not more just than prudent to wait for the papers which Her Majesty had been graciously pleased to promise should be laid before their Lordships. Let them, meanwhile, rather content themselves with the satisfaction they must all experience, that notwithstanding the extraordinary events which had occurred on the Continent during the last year, the peace of this country had not been disturbed. Let them not forget, in their prosperity, that if any one had ventured to prophesy last spring to their Lordships that not only peace would have been maintained during the whole of 1848, but that Her Majesty would be able at the commencement of the Session of 1849 to say that the present aspect of affairs enabled Her to propose great reductions in the estimates, every one of their Lordships would have answered, that if such should prove to be the case, it would be a source of congratulation not only to this country, but to the whole world. He (Earl Bruce) would do no more than allude to that attachment to the Throne, and that love of peace and order, which had been so eminently displayed in this country during the past year. That good feeling towards the institutions of the country had already borne good fruit. While almost every other country in Europe found its revenue diminishing, and its expenditure increasing, we were fortunate enough to see our revenue increasing and our estimates proposed to be diminished. In a financial point of view, this was very encouraging; and he trusted their Lordships would receive with as much satisfaction the announcement of some alleviation of the burdens of the people by a diminution of the expenditure, as that with which it would be assuredly received by the nation in general. At the same time he had no doubt their Lordships would desire to see any retrenchment, especially if it concerned the effective force of Her Majesty's service, carried out with the greatest possible caution. He fully concurred in this desire, and felt perfect confidence that Her Majesty's Government would not propose any reductions which the state of the country and of Europe would not fully justify. No doubt it was a very difficult thing to make any great reduction in the Army of this country. It must not be forgotten that the Army of this country, with the exception of the portion of it employed in Ireland, were almost entirely kept up for the protection of the colonies; but until some other means were devised for the defence of our vast colonial empire, a large number of troops were necessary for that purpose. The position of the British Army was different to the armies in other countries, where, whatever the force kept up, it could in cases of emergency be readily concentrated upon a given point; but the peculiarity in the case of our Army was, that if we had 50,000, or even 100,000 men, in fifty different parts of the world, thousands of miles apart, they could not be concentrated: no one colony, generally speaking, could expect aid from another colony, but each colony must be provided within itself with a force sufficient for its own defence. Unless, therefore, we were provided with other means of defending the colonies, and we wished to preserve them, an efficient force must be maintained at each station. Whether or not the colonies ought to be kept by the mother country might be a fair subject for discussion; but it must be decided upon its own merits; and so long as it was proposed to maintain them, every Government of this country would think it their duty to provide them with the necessary troops. He had full confidence that such was the intention of the present Government. But if economy and retrenchment could be introduced into the Army, he was confident that their Lordships would hail it with joy. If he ventured a remark upon this subject in the presence of the noble and gallant Duke, and the other high military authorities around him, it would be that under no circumstances should any reduction be made in the artillery of this country; it was the only kind of force which could with any certainty contend against superior force of numbers; and he confessed that for every 1,000 men reduced in the line he should like to see 300 or 400 added to the artillery. He thought that such a force might be made capable of fulfilling many of the duties of the line in garrison and guard duties, and might be made available in aid of the civil power. Moreover, the artillery was the kind of force with which, as it required a long time to render it efficient, we should be always amply provided. Reduction of expenditure was unquestionably desirable. It would show to the people of this country that the Government did not neglect economy in making reductions whenever practicable, and it would inspire confidence in the maintenance of peace, a confidence which would be useful both in this country and abroad. In France, he was happy to believe, there was a great disposition at this moment to reduce their army, and to cultivate peaceable relations with this country. Let them show confidence in those peaceable professions, which he believed to be sincere. A small reduction in the Army of this country would greatly contribute to confirm that disposition. In a financial point of view, the increase in the revenue was satisfactory; but more, if possible, as an index of gradually returning prosperity. He need scarcely remind their Lordships of the deplorable state of trade at the close of the year 1847, or of the unusual assistance it was thought it might require during the year 1848. After the meeting of Parliament, last year, there was some return to a better state of things, an improvement which might have been more rapid and apparent in the course of that year, had it not been for the extraordinary events on the Continent. No doubt those events, and the state of Ireland at the time, had a considerable effect on the ordinary revenue, already crippled by the famine of the preceding year; but by the returns of the revenue made up in October, it was apparent that there was a great improvement; the increase in the ordinary revenue in the quarter ending the 13th of that month, as compared with the corresponding quarter of the preceding year, being no less than 722,000*l.* or thereabouts; and on the 5th January last there was an increase of 442,615*l.*, as compared with the corresponding quarter of the preceding year—on the whole year there was in ordinary revenue an increase of 875,705*l.* He trusted that a continued improvement might be anticipated as the year 1848 receded from view, and that he might claim their Lordships' concurrence in congratulating Her Majesty on the improved circumstances of the country, the revival of manufacturing industry, and the progressive improvement of the revenue. On the subject of Ireland—though a separate paragraph was as usual necessary—would that the same expressions of congratulation as to the loyalty of this country and its improving commercial prosperity, should be equally applicable to every part of the united kingdom! But though a separate allusion was still necessary, he was happy to say it was not quite so unfavourable as at some foomer periods. Compared with the noble Lord who had moved the Address last year (the Earl of Yarborough), he (Earl Bruce) had some advantages, for it had been the duty of the former to forewarn their Lordships of the storm that was coming, and to point out the necessity for the Government asking them for new and more extended powers. In this respect he (Earl Bruce) was more fortunate, in being able to remind them that the storm was past, that the rebellion which was looked forward to by many with great alarm—by all with anxiety—was crushed, and that at a time when revolutions in almost every country had been, for a time at least, successful. Thanks to the prudence and foresight of the Government last year in asking for those increased powers; thanks to the alacrity and cordiality with which they were granted by their Lordships and the other House of Parliament; and thanks also, it was no more than justice to add, to the energy, discretion, and firmness with which those powers were exercised by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland—that rebellion, or rather attempt at rebellion, was effectually put down without the loss of a single man on the side of order and the law. When it was considered that that success was achieved not in ordinary times, not at a period either when popular outbreaks, as now, were on the decline, but at a time when almost every country in Europe had succumbed to the effect of insurrectionary movements, he thought it a subject for great satisfaction; and in that opinion he hoped their Lordships would concur. It had, however, seemed necessary to the Government to ask for a continuation for a limited period, of those extraordinary powers which had been so promptly granted to them last year; and he was sure from the discreet and moderate manner in which they had been used, and the salutary effects which they had produced, their Lordships would not hesitate in renewing the Act of last Session. Not only was this desirable for the sake of present peace and quiet, but as giving, under Providence, the fairest opportunity for the introduction of salutary measures for the improvement of Ireland in future. When outbreak was impossible, the Irish people of themselves might turn to more profitable employment; but at all events, peace was the only chance for those well-disposed and energetic men really anxious to benefit their country, to carry out improvements which they were willing and anxious to introduce. Without tranquillity no confidence could exist, and consequently no capital be employed. It had been the good fortune of this country to have in Ireland at a most anxious time a Lord Lieutenant who had proved himself competent to all the difficulties of his situation. That noble Lord was not likely to ask unnecessarily for a continuance of increased powers: it would be contrary to his nature and to his political inclinations to govern otherwise than with a light hand, whenever practicable so to do; and if the noble Lord, with his experience of Ireland, asked for these powers, it was certain that he felt them necessary, and that it would not be safe to refuse them. Having now alluded to the principal topics in Her Majesty's Speech, he trusted it would not be deemed improper in him, who was the first to address their Lordships this Session, to say a few words as a tribute of respect to the sad losses which the country had sustained since the last Session, in those public men who had been taken from the world in a manner so sudden and unexpected. In the presence of noble Lords opposite, who were so much more competent than he was to describe the talents of a noble Lord, a Member of the other House of Parliament (Lord George Bentinck), whose loss must be deeply deplored, he (Earl Bruce) would only venture to say, that having had the honour and good fortune of living on terms of intimacy with that noble Lord, though differing with him generally in political opinions, no one could more highly appreciate his abilities, his perseverance, and the manly sincerity of purpose apparent in all he undertook. In the other House of Parliament, also, the Government and the country had to regret the loss of a most able and talented Member of the Administration who had recently been appointed to fill a high office (Mr. Charles Buller), at a time when his abilities were peculiarly useful. In their Lordships' House, likewise, the country had sustained a great loss, and the Members of the Government had most unexpectedly been deprived by death of an able Colleague and amiable Friend; and he was only speaking, he felt sure, the sentiments of all their Lordships, without distinction of party, when he said that the late Lord Auckland had possessed the universal respect and esteem of every one in that House. He would not omit alluding to another noble Lord, though he had lately taken but little part in public affairs; but his (Earl Bruce's) side of the House could not forget that that noble Viscount had been for many years their distinguished leader in that House, and he felt certain that every one must have been deeply grieved to learn that Lord Melbourne had ceased to live. The noble Lord then expressed the hope that the House would agree to the Address cordially and unanimously, for never had there been an occasion on which cordiality and unanimity were more desirable than at the commencement of the Session of 1849, as showing to the world, notwithstanding the extraordinary events of last year, on the one hand a Sovereign touchingly alluding to the loyalty of every class of the people, and on the other a Parliament anxious to give new proofs of its loyal attachment to the Sovereign. Europe would then better believe in and understand the solidity of the British Monarchy, which, while showing its own strength, demonstrated to the world that a constitutional monarchy, on a really liberal basis, was unquestionably the best form of government to withstand those revolutionary storms which had nearly torn to pieces every other form of government around it. The noble Lord concluded by expressing his grateful thanks for the kind attention and patience with which their Lordships had heard him, and then read the following humble Address, the adoption of which he moved:—

"Most Gracious Sovereign,

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal Subjects, the Lords, Spiritual and Temporal, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to return Your Majesty our humble Thanks for Your Majesty's most gracious Speech from the Throne.

"We beg leave humbly to assure Your Majesty that we participate in the Satisfaction which Your Majesty has been pleased to express, that both in the North and in the South of Europe the contending Parties have consented to a Suspension of Arms for the Purpose of negotiating Terms of Peace.

"We thank Your Majesty for informing us that the Hostilities carried on in the Island of Sicily were attended with Circumstances so revolting that the British and French Admirals were impelled by Motives of Humanity to interpose, and to stop the Effusion of Blood, and that Your Majesty has availed Yourself of the Interval thus obtained to propose, in conjunction with France, to the King of Naples an Arrangement calculated to produce a permanent Settlement of Affairs in Sicily.

"We beg leave to thank Your Majesty for the Assurance of Your anxious Endeavour, in offering Your good Offices to the various contending Powers, to prevent the Extension of the Calamities of War, and to lay the Foundation for lasting and honourable Peace. And we beg leave to acquaint Your Majesty of the Gratification which we derive from the Expression of Your constant Desire to maintain with all Foreign States the most friendly Relations.

"We thank Your Majesty for informing us that the Papers connected with these Transactions will be laid before Parliament by Direction of Your Majesty, as soon as the Interests of the Public Service will permit.

"We beg to state to Your Majesty, that we regret to learn that a Rebellion of a formidable

Character has broken out in the Punjaub, and that the Governor General of India has been compelled, for the Preservation of the Peace of the Country, to assemble a considerable Force, which is now engaged in Military Operations, and we cordially rejoice at the Information which Your Majesty has imparted to us, that these unprovoked Disturbances have not affected the Peace of British India.

"WE beg leave humbly to assure Your Majesty that the Restrictions imposed upon Commerce by the Navigation Laws will engage our most earnest Attention, and that it will be our Duty to consider whether it be right to repeal or to modify their Provisions, if we shall find that these Laws are in whole or in part unnecessary for the Maintenance of our Maritime Power, while they fetter Trade and Industry.

"WE beg leave humbly to express the Satisfaction in which we participate with Your Majesty that this Portion of the United Kingdom has remained tranquil amid the Convulsions which have disturbed so many Parts of Europe.

"WHILST rejoicing that the Insurrection in Ireland has not been renewed, we unite with Your Majesty in deploring the Existence of a Spirit of Disaffection, and we assure Your Majesty that our serious Consideration will be devoted to the Intimation of Your Majesty that Your Majesty is compelled, with Regret, to ask for a Continuance, for a limited Time, of those Powers which in the last Session were deemed by Parliament to be necessary for the Preservation of the Public Tranquillity.

"WE most sincerely share with Your Majesty the Satisfaction which Your Majesty feels at the Revival of Commerce from those Shocks which at the Commencement of last Session were to be deplored; and we learn with Gratification that the Condition of the Manufacturing Districts is likewise more encouraging than it has been for a considerable Period, and that the State of the Revenue is one of progressive Improvement.

"WE assure Your Majesty that we participate in the great Concern which Your Majesty has been pleased to express on account of the very severe Distress in some Parts of Ireland which has been caused by another Failure of the Potato Crop.

"WE humbly assure Your Majesty that our best attention will be devoted to the Subject of the Operation of the Laws for the Relief of the Poor in Ireland; and we beg leave humbly to convey to Your Majesty the Expression of our Thanks for Your gracious Intimation, that any Measure by which those Laws may be beneficially amended, and the Condition of the People may be improved, will receive Your Majesty's cordial Assent.

"WE beg leave humbly to thank Your Majesty for the gracious Manner with which Your Majesty has been pleased to advert to the loyal Spirit of Your People, and to that Attachment to the Institutions of their Country which has animated them during a Period of Commercial Difficulty, deficient Production of Food, and Political Revolution.

"WE join with Your Majesty in humbly looking to the Protection of Almighty God for Favour in our continued Progress; and We beg leave to convey to Your Majesty the Assurance that we will faithfully assist Your Majesty in upholding the Fabric of the Constitution, founded as it is upon the Principles of Freedom and of Justice."

LORD BATEMAN: My Lords, in rising to second the Motion made by the noble Earl, I feel that I need not ask for that indulgence at your hands which I am sure will be cheerfully and voluntarily given to one who for the first time addresses your Lordships' House. My Lords, Her Majesty has with satisfaction alluded to the state of tranquillity which at present reigns throughout Her kingdom, and at the same time has given us assurances that it is Her earnest desire to maintain friendly relations with all foreign Powers. However accustomed we may have been to the same assurance, yet, my Lords, at a period like the present, this announcement from the Throne ought to fill us with more than usual gratitude and satisfaction. We may, indeed, esteem ourselves fortunate, inasmuch as that while we have deplored the state of anarchy and revolution by which other neighbouring empires have been so lately convulsed, we have the blessings of peace preserved to us intact. I need scarcely remind your Lordships of the changes, both social and political, which have rendered startling the history of 1848. It were well indeed for all could a veil be thrown over scenes almost unequalled in their astounding consequences. But were I to ask you to take with me an impartial, unprejudiced, retrospective glance at the events which have been felt by their terrible results throughout the whole continent of Europe—events of the most unprecedented character—events which have followed each other in such dread and such rapid succession as to baffle the energies and to outstrip the calculations of the keenest politicians—I think, my Lords, that, with me, you will be induced to value, even at a higher rate, the advantages we possess in our own country—to admire the firm basis of our own long-established constitution, and at the same time cordially and impartially to appreciate and to praise the honest direction, the prompt energy, and the wise ability of those advisers of Her Majesty, who have upheld—and with safety upheld—that constitution, through such difficult and perilous times. It has been their desire and their aim throughout, not only to preserve undisturbed our own tranquillity at home, but by acting the part of mediators to prevent as much as possible other nations from going to war. Whilst your Lordships will hear with delight the intelligence conveyed by Her Majesty that an armistice has been concluded in the north and south of Europe, you will also cordially join in the regret expressed that differences have existed amongst more southern Powers. It is, however, satisfactory to be informed that negotiations are now pending, and conditions are now being offered, which, if accepted, will, I trust, prove the wisdom of our mediation, and by the adjustment of existing differences tend to produce a permanent settlement of affairs in Sicily. I now come to that part of Her Majesty's Speech in which allusion is made to the success of those measures which have been adopted for the suppression of tumult and outbreak in Ireland. I think, my Lords, that you will not refuse to award that praise which is so justly due to those who have so ably carried out those measures, and that you will, in common with myself, confidently hope that the noble Earl who, with the support of Her Majesty's Ministers in England, has been instrumental in preserving a state of pacification in Ireland very different from that which existed at the commencement of last year, will, with the same co-operation, and with the assistance of your Lordships' advice and deliberation, endeavour to give increased protection to life, security to property, and eventually a more healthy prospect to our Irish fellow-subjects. Her Majesty has been pleased to recommend to your Lordships' consideration a modification of the Irish Poor Law; such a modification as will tend to alleviate the pressure upon landed property which in certain districts has been so severely felt. My Lords, our thanks are due to Her Majesty for Her forethought, and the usual care which has been evinced, and the measure which has been suggested for lessening the sufferings of that portion of Her people. The wish that Her Majesty has graciously expressed to alleviate as much as possible the burdens of the people, by a reduction of the national expenditure, cannot fail to be as satisfactory to your Lordships as to the people of this country. The investigation which has been made, and is still continuing, under the sanction of Her Majesty's Ministers into the expenditure of public offices; the recent appointment to the Admiralty of one so well experienced in financial detail—are sufficient guarantees that, in obedience to Her Majesty's wishes, every reduction in the expenditure shall be promoted. I do not mean, my Lords, any reduction which might be viewed through the false medium of a democratic and shortsighted policy; but such a reduction, and such a reduction only, as is consistent with the proper maintenance and efficient regulation of the different branches of the public service, and, at the same time, a due regard to the welfare and adequate defence of our various colonies, that so justly expect from the mother country the protection they are entitled to receive. There are other topics to which Her Majesty has alluded, which will, ere long, come before your Lordships' House in Committee, and will receive that attention and patient consideration which their importance to the welfare of our navigation, and to the prosperity of our agricultural interest, so justly entitle them to claim at your hands. Upon these matters it would be presumptuous in me to offer an opinion, from my inexperience in public affairs, and my short acquaintance with your Lordships' House. Indeed, I should be sorry, if in the little I have said, I should inadvertently have given utterance to any expression which might provoke discussion, and thereby prevent that cordiality, that unanimity, with which I am most anxious you should vote for the Address which I have the honour to second.

Lord BROUGHAM rose to address their Lordships under a deep sense of the responsibility of one who, in the present condition of this country, but still more in the present complicated condition of the world at large, ventured to deliver any opinion, however maturely he might have formed it, or whatever rare opportunities of obtaining information he might have enjoyed, upon the important events which had occurred during the past year. It gave him most unfeigned satisfaction to agree with his noble Friends opposite (the authors of the Speech, and the two noble Lords who moved and seconded the Address) in believing—although he was much afraid that his noble Friend the mover had expressed too strong an opinion upon the subject — that there was a considerable improvement in the commercial and manufacturing situation of the country. But with respect to the alleged improvement in our financial position, he could not help thinking that the noble Lord had unfortunately taken rather too much credit for an increase in the revenue over the preceding year to the extent of 800,000*l.*, omitting, as he did, the material consideration, that this was the exact amount of duty collected under a law which had now expired, and of the repeal of which he (Lord Brougham) most cordially approved. This revenue was the result of a system which was defended by his noble Friends behind him, but of which he could not approve. The consequence of the new measure, the repeal, coming into operation, would be to cut off the very sum of 800,000*l.*, and which, as it chanced, on that very day ceased to be receivable. His noble Friend should not have forgotten that 800,000*l.* was paid for corn duties during the last year, and that that amount, which was received in the year ending the 1st of February, 1849, could not be received in the year ending the 1st of February, 1850; he thought, therefore, that his noble Friend had taken rather a rose-coloured view of the subject; but if the commerce of the country increased, and the manufactures increased, the result most probably would be a corresponding increase of the revenue in excise and in customs from other less questionable sources than corn duties. He was bound to say that there were one or two points in Her Majesty's Speech, which had been much adverted to, with respect to which he could not help feeling some apprehension. He knew that he took a very unpopular view of the matter when he stated that he could not agree in the expressions of congratulation of his noble Friend on the large reductions which they were told were to be made in the estimates. He could not help thinking that an agitation—to use the popular expression—an agitation commenced in this country under very unhappy auspices, in his opinion—an agitation influenced by very questionable motives, though for very unquestionable objects—for the most pernicious objects—commencing somewhere in the West Riding of Yorkshire, passing over into the county palatine of Lancaster, and installed in one metropolis of agitation, Liverpool, with branches in the subordinate capitals of agitation—of Manchester and elsewhere—aided and assisted by the Chartist, Radical, and pseudo-economical press of the metropolis, the centre of all agitation—he could not help thinking that such a movement was one of a most dangerous character. There was now, he found, a crusade against the land. He had been from the beginning, he confessed, the avowed, and open, and though feeble, yet zealous and conscientious friend of free trade. He confessed that he had been one who, out of his great attachment to the principle of free trade, had been induced to tolerate the means, though they were most objectionable, by which the free-trade movement had been promoted, but certainly not carried; for it was not true to say, but false, that the corn laws were repealed by the eloquence of certain agitators out of doors or in Parliament. The corn laws were repealed by the Ministers of the Crown, backed by the Opposition of the day, of which he formed an humble portion. But for them those corn laws would never have been shaken, which were now by their help repealed. The love which he entertained for the principles of free trade, and the zeal which he felt to have those principles recognised by law, had induced him to bear with the unconstitutional and all but unlawful agitation out of doors by which the great measure of the repeal of the corn laws was supported, though not carried. Therefore, he felt it the more incumbent on him, from the part he bore in that controversy, to take now his stand in the outset against the present agitation that had commenced against the landed interest. They were told that it was the bounden duty of Parliament to alter the system of finance of the country in two material particulars. The Speech from the Throne, he grieved to say, appeared to partake of that opinion as to one of those particulars, for it indicated, as he understood it, an intention to make reductions in the Army and Navy. That undoubtedly was the intention of the allusion, although the estimates were referred to in general terms; but if he wanted a commentary on the meaning of the large reduction of those estimates which the Speech spoke of, he should have had it from the speech which had been made by the noble Mover of the Address. That noble Lord read that passage as meaning a large reduction of the military and naval forces of the country. The other particular to which he referred was one which formed the main object of the present agitation—namely, that not only should the Army and Navy be reduced, but that the expenditure of the country should be contracted by somewhere about 10,000,000*l.*, so as to assimilate it to the expenditure of the year 1835; and this demand was made without making the slightest reference to the position of the country at those two periods, without the least knowledge probably of the actual state of the country in either the one period or the other—for he perceived a manifestation of the most profound ignorance of all the details connected with this important subject. But, say these persons, not only shall the expenditure be reduced by lopping off these ten millions, but the revenue shall be raised upon totally different principles from those on which it is at present raised. It seemed, according to these parties, that the aristocracy of the country—that was the popular doctrine—in both Houses of Parliament, had long resolved to ease itself of all burdens by throwing them on the trading, manufacturing, and monied interests, and on the poorer classes; that there was, to take a favourite example, no tax imposed upon the succession to landed property, while, on the other hand, there was a heavy tax upon the succession to personal property. It was a common thing to hear it said by these agitators, that by this inequality of taxation the widow and the orphan were robbed, in order that the great lord's estate might be permitted to pass in succession free from all taxation. Now, anything so utterly absurd—so wildly wide of the truth as this doctrine, which was made the great stalking-horse on these occasions, during his whole experience he had never heard broached. They were told there were two millions a year received in the way of legacy duty, but they were not told that of this sum 300,000*l.* was taken upon leasehold, that is, landed property; consequently it was only 1,700,000*l.* in personal estates; but, at least, say they, 1,700,000*l.* is taken upon personal property, not upon land. They said, look at a man who died worth 20,000*l.*, 2,000*l.* of this money was taken as legacy duty. But this was not the fact. The only case in which such a duty would be paid was, where the money was left to a stranger—that, however, was a case which very seldom happened. If it were left to the widow of the testator, nothing at all would be paid; if to the children, 1 per cent; or if to other relations, 3 or 4 or 5 per cent. He had the curiosity of looking into the returns lately upon this subject, and he found that just one-sixth of the whole amount of legacy duty paid out of personal property was derived from the charge of 10 per cent. From the returns it appeared that the one per cent charge was paid on 4,000,000*l.*, while the higher duties were paid on 26,000,000*l.* Well, now suppose that a man leaves 20,000*l.*, the duty upon an average required to be paid is 400*l.* once in twenty years. Suppose on the other hand that the 20,000*l.* be vested in land, what does he pay yearly in the way of tax on the 800*l.* a year income? In the first place he pays land tax every year he lives, which alone amounted to a great deal more than the tax upon legacies of personal property. This tax also was paid, not once, namely, when a man died, but every year of the lives of the landed proprietors. Again, more than 500,000*l.* was paid for church rates, all of which fell upon land, though traders went to church as well as squires; 1,150,000*l.* a year was paid for highway rates, all of which fell upon land; and 8,150,000*l.* for poor rates and county rates; and besides these, there were charges for road making and other local burdens of a similar character. These charges together amounted to nearly ten millions a year charged upon the landed interest of the country. Now, by one calculation of the Committee, this amounted to 15 per cent on the rental of the country, by another to 11 per cent; but take it at only 10, it was more yearly than all the legacy duty together. He knew that he might as well address himself to the walls as to those financial reformers, as they called themselves, for they would disregard his statements, as only fit for the House of Lords, and say it was safer to trust their round assertions. He had thought it to be his duty to give his opinion as to the proposal for throwing the burden of taxation on land, as well as on the propriety of the agitations which had been excited, which he not only should not join, but which he should resist to the uttermost. He would pass over the circumstances that the land tax, when it was enacted in the reign of William and Mary, was intended to apply to personal as well as to landed property, and the former in as great degree as the latter; but now personal property was not liable to be charged at all on this principle of taxation. But we, the aristocracy, pass every year an Act to exempt personal property from the poor rates, else it must pay. But then some of those Gentlemen denied that the land paid the great bulk of the poor rates, for they told the world that they, the traders, paid poor rates upon their factories. What of that? They paid as landowners. Suppose the rent of a factory to be 1,000*l.* a year, and the profits made in that factory to be 30,000*l.* a year, which of the two sums formed the basis on which the poor rates were calculated? Most assuredly the 1,000*l.* a year. What pretence, then, was there for saying that personal property contributed to the poor rates as largely as did the landed interest? Of course a man might have land as well as factories, and in that case he paid as a landowner. These manufacturers, perhaps, did not tell the world that they manufactured other things, besides cotton twist; but every one who knew anything of them well knew that they manufactured paupers; where the land produced one pauper, manufactures created half a dozen, and the land paid for the whole. He had said nothing of another burden, and a heavy one, on the land, and on the land alone—the stamps on conveyance or transfer of real property: not an acre can be sold, nor an acre mortgaged, without a heavy duty. When an attempt was made in 1830 or 1831 to subject the transfer of stock to a small tax, such a cry was raised in the City, that the plan was at once given up; but the meek agriculturist pays without any complaint at all. Such was the state of the argument as between the landed and the commercial and manufacturing interests. The objects, then, of the Gentlemen who were engaged in the present agitation were unquestionable. He must say that he doubted the good faith of these persons in the present agitation, for he could not conceive how it was possible for men to put forward such statements, when the truth was staring them in the face, unless they wilfully shut their eyes to it, as these persons found it convenient to do. Then they were told that there should be a reduction to a large amount in the naval and military establishments of the country. His noble and illustrious Friend who then sat at the table (the Duke of Wellington) always desired to reduce the Army till it came within the smallest possible limits that were necessary for the defence of our honour and our possessions. It was said, the French were reducing their army. But our case was not similar to that of France. The case of England with regard to her army was peculiar to herself; but, whether this country enjoyed unmingled prosperity or was reduced to the deepest poverty, it mattered not; in neither case ought a single shilling to be taken for the maintenance of either the Army or the Navy beyond what the strict necessity of the case demanded. Now, looking at the state of Europe, he saw no reason whatever for saying that any large reductions in the Army or the Navy could be safely effected. Since the last meeting of Parliament there was every reason to feel that the defences of the country ought to be strengthened. He could not conceive what the noble Mover meant by all Europe having been at peace; nor what the Speech meant by a suspension of hostilities everywhere. If he began by turning towards the north, and then carried his view southwards from Schleswig-Holstein to the foot of the boot of Italy, he saw nothing but grounds for apprehending war. Whether he looked at Hungary, Croatia, Vienna, Piedmont, Venice, or Sicily, he saw nothing calculated to relieve that apprehension. It was confessed by the Speech from the Throne that hostilities were only suspended in those places where war had so recently raged; and there was no part of Europe which presented that unbroken tranquillity which would warrant this country entertaining a proposition for any extensive reduction in the military or naval establishments. It was said that there was a suspension of hostilities; but how did that suspension take place? After the battle of Waterloo, when the enemy sustained a complete defeat, there was no doubt a cessation of hostilities. So now Charles Albert, the King of Sardinia, having been completely routed with his army, and only saved from being driven from his capital by the tender mercy of the Austrian general and Austrian Government, was, undoubtedly, forced to suspend hostilities. A suspension of hostilities was an incident, and a necessary incident, of great success. If one party was completely victorious, and the other soundly beaten, there must necessarily be a suspension of hostilities. Hostilities implied two parties. To have fighting at all, there must be two to fight. Anything more complete than the victory of Prince Windischgratz in Austria there could not be. In honour of that gallant officer he could scarcely say too much; and, though he was charged with cruelty—with superfluous cruelty in the execution of an individual who was a deputy from Frankfort—though an example was here made of which he deplored the necessity—he yet believed that nothing was done in this respect by Prince Windischgratz but what necessity required. He (Lord Brougham) was satisfied that the parties who thus complained, had forgotten that this person had taken an active part in the revolt at Vienna, which had been attended with such atrocious assassinations. He had actually made a speech declaring that 200 of the aristocracy must be "Latourizeert," that is, murdered with torture, like General Latour. For such conduct had he been executed. He deplored the necessity for resorting to such a proceeding; but he heard not one word from those who so strongly censured it in commiseration for those who were killed by the mob in Vienna. In Hungary there had been very large talkers before the battle, but the great majority absented themselves on the day of fight as the Milanese had done, and as the Irish had done; and the few who did appear were as completely defeated by Jellachich as Carlo Alberto was in Italy by Radetzki; and in that case, as in the north of Italy, there was a suspension of hostilities from there being a want of combatants. With respect to Sicily, the two gallant officers, the English and French admirals, they were told in the Speech, had been moved by feelings of humanity to interfere to put a stop to sanguinary hostilities. After reading a description of what was said to have taken place there, he felt horror at those atrocities; but he also thought it was most perilous to allow military or naval officers to take upon themselves to enter upon proceedings out of the four corners of their instructions, and to take part in political proceedings from their feelings of compassion, and to judge as to the propriety or non-propriety of interference, instead of waiting until they had received instructions from their respective Governments. It was said, to be sure, that they interfered out of compassion, and that then our Government stept in and offered terms for reconciling the Neapolitan Government with its Sicilian subjects; but he doubted whether that rule would hold good if applied to ourselves. Let their Lordships suppose such a case as Ireland complaining of oppression and misgovernment, and that the Dutch, the Austrian, and the French squadrons were to present themselves in our harbours. What would they think of the Austrian Admiral saying "We interfere out of compassion?" or what would they think if the French Government were to come and say—"We take this opportunity of the suspension of hostilities to step in, and we beg to interpose with a proposition which we hope will accommodate all interests. We propose that there should be a Parliament in Ireland upon a certain footing, and for local, and not for Imperial purposes?" Why, our answer of course would be, that we were much obliged by that kind offer of interference, but that we did not wish to have any earthly interference with our government of Ireland. We should request of the Dutch or the French to keep their wisdom for their own purposes—they might have occasion for it hereafter; and we should beg of France to leave us to govern Ireland in our own way. Suppose, as he (Lord Brougham) said in last July, this answer had been given by Naples to our offer of interference in Sicilian affairs, he confessed he knew not what reply could be given; and, therefore, he thought great caution should be observed as regarded any interference on our part with the affairs of other States. With respect to the state of things on the other side of the Channel, he must say that he felt the deepest desire, and the most sincere wish, that nothing might interfere to disturb the harmony that at present prevailed between the two countries. He must say, that with regard to France, he gave his noble Friend (Lord Palmerston) the greatest credit for the course he had pursued—for the judicious and skilful management of their relations with that country. The greatest praise was due to his noble Friend and former Colleague, for the address and good management he had displayed with respect to all his arrangements. These arrangements had had very great influence in his (Lord Brougham's) opinion in preventing France from taking prematurely steps to interfere in the affairs of Italy. He believed that that had been contemplated, and it was the greatest delusion that could enter into any man's imagination to suppose that all that had taken place was a matter of course, that it was all downhill work, even if there had been no interference on our part. "For," said those persons who knew nothing whatever of the particulars—and he (Lord Brougham) happened to know something of them—"France has enough to do at home—she is crippled in her finances—she has a deficit of 22,000,000*l.* sterling—she is torn by contending parties, and is in no mood for war." They did not know the state of France who said so. He (Lord Brougham) gave his opinion on that point advisedly, and he said that they were ignorant, profoundly ignorant, of the state of France who held that doctrine. The present position of France was, undoubtedly, a very peculiar one, and such as was never before witnessed; but when he looked to the probabilities of war, he must look to the actual government of the country whose going to war was in question. A short time since the French Government were not perhaps going to war, but they were doing things that would render a war inevitable; and a new Government might any day do so again. France might, to-morrow, issue a proclamation, commencing, " Whereas it is fit and proper that we should go to war in order to establish a universal republic, we hereby proclaim a general war against all crowned heads." They might think it right to do so in order to promote republican and democratic institutions. This they had done in 1792. But had they never done so again? Why, ten months ago there was a pledge almost formally given that France would assist the people everywhere against their rulers. The question was, what security had we that the present tranquillity would remain unbroken, and that the existing peace would continue? The question was how long was that unbroken, secure tranquillity to endure? It was no longer ago than last Monday that it had been found necessary to call out 60,000 troops in Paris in order to prevent insurrection, and to plant cavalry and artillery at every post throughout the city, to prevent an outbreak. How long, then, was that unbroken peace to continue? Suppose a similar unhappy occurrence were to take place to-morrow as had happened in the month of June, were they quite sure that it would be as effectually resisted and put down? Could any man say how long the present French Government was likely to continue? No man could tell how long the Republic itself would last. Why, not later than three weeks ago it was said by those best informed on the subject, that there was not a republican to be found except in Paris. If France decided upon returning to monarchical institutions, she might then count upon peace and prosperity; and instead of having the customs of the country coming down to one-half—instead of having the trade diminished to one-half in the course of a year—instead of France being in distress —instead of Strasburg being unemployed —instead of Marseilles being unoccupied, and almost all the other great towns of France in distress—instead of that, they would have France raising her head and putting forth her strength, and showing those elements of illimitable prosperity which no arithmetic could count: that would be the result of a restoration. If there should be a restoration, and there being no republicans in France, if, as was very natural, France did not choose to have a republic—no doubt then prosperity to France, and peace to France, and peace to Europe, would be the inevitable and the happy consequence. It appeared to him that sooner or later that day would come. Although there might be some delay, it was not the less certain; but the delay might be very considerable, because, when men committed themselves to a certain form of government, however much against their will, if it was effected by a great and overruling force to which they had once yielded, a feeling of self-conceit—of human pride —of obstinacy—prevented them from retracing their steps; and, therefore, it would be some time before they could take the step which he believed, from the bottom of their hearts, the rulers and leaders as well as the people of France desired. But, then, instead of the monarchy, they had another alternative proposed to them. Let them look at the late Presidential election. Why, one-third or one-fourth the number of the persons who voted for General Cavaignac voted for Ledru Rollin and Raspail. What did that mean? What did the vote for those two individuals mean? A republic. Ah, but not the republic of Cavaignac—it was the *Republique Rouge*— the republic of the Jacobins—the republic of '92, '93, '94; and to those 400,000 who had so voted we must add as many more who voted for Cavaignac under the influence of office, but who in their hearts were devoted to the *Rouge Republique*. Those men cared nothing about a deficit in the finances—they cared nothing about the huge, the appalling deficit of 22,000,000*l*. sterling—they had nothing to do but to apply the sponge—they would at once issue assignats; and it should be remembered that Ledru Rollin, the leader of the Jacobins, had charged the Provisional Government with a dereliction of duty in not having before this time issued two milliards of assignats. Why, the advent of that party to power was inevitable war. Bankruptcy for France no doubt it was; but war for Europe—since nothing was more certain than that a warlike people, when bankrupt, nowise lost the power of engaging in hostilities. It appeared to him that in this state of things it would be very hazardous to reduce our establishments. With regard to the reduction of our military establishments, it must be observed that there was a great difference between ourselves and France in that respect. If the French reduced 50,000 men in the next year, and then found it necessary to go to war, they would recruit these 50,000 men in a month much more easily than we could recruit 10,000 men in a year, the French system being entirely military. Why, 50,000 men left the French army every year, and were absorbed into civil occupations, and there would be little difficulty in rendering their services again available. He would not refer to the other topics that had been alluded to in the Speech, but he would once more impress upon the Government the necessity of cautiously avoiding all interference in the concerns of other nations, and of strictly adhering to the faith of treaties. There ought to be a determined resolution to reject the modern cant, the mere senseless jargon of nationality applied to the distribution of power among the States of Europe; for instance, the saying that Austria had no right to Lombardy, because there was no national community of interests or feelings between Italians and Germans. As well might it be said that England had no right to Ireland, because Ireland was not Saxon; and yet that was the observation made with regard to Austria, which had possessed Lombardy for three or four centuries. He trusted they would disregard all those baseless, fantastical theories which would lead to the distribution of power upon such principles; and to discountenance them he held to be the imperative duty of the advisers of the British Crown. There was another thing he held to be equally advisable—he meant an adherence to the ancient alliances of this country. If there was one country more than another which should be the cornerstone of our foreign policy — a country which was the national ally and had a common interest with ours, and which came into conflict with us in no possible point —he would say it was the great Austrian empire. They should on all occasions court that alliance, and her enemies should in all cases be ours. Next to Austria, he would name another great empire, the remoteness of whose position, and its having no point of conflict with France, would, in the ordinary state of Europe, make her an ally of the French. Happily, the accident of republican institutions had for the present alienated those two Powers, and thrown Russia, if not into our arms, yet into our counsels. Of this we should avail ourselves to ally ourselves with a mighty empire, which, impregnable in itself, and having resources that no other country possessed, even pecuniary as well as military resources, was become a still more valuable bulwark against the assaults of the great central republican organisation. With regard to German policy, he must say that a more complicated subject did not exist. One thing he had certainly formed expectations of a short time since, namely, that there would be no objection on the part of the German States to form one great Western Germanic empire, placed under the jurisdiction of one of their own sovereigns; but those hopes were now at an end. The Diet of Frankfort had completely failed in its object, and he anticipated with much composure of mind, if not with joy, seeing it removed from the face of European polity, leaving matters in that part of the Continent to return to their pristine state before the mania of revolution and the itch of constitution-making had so unhappily disturbed and distracted the Continent. Before he closed, he could not avoid referring to what had been said in Her Majesty's Speech with regard to Ireland. He believed that there was not a shadow of doubt that their Lordships were disposed —and he hoped the other House of Parliament was disposed—to assent to measures, strong measures if they should be required, for the maintenance of peace in that country. There was another thing he wished to see. Whatever difference of opinion there might be as to the necessity of new laws for Ireland, no one would doubt the inestimable benefit of giving them new lawyers. Could any mortal man out of Ireland ever have thought of putting fifteen men upon their trial under a recent Act of Parliament for an offence under that Act, and not describing the offence out of that Act of Parliament? It was said that the Irish law officer of the Crown was only a Chancery lawyer; but no Chancery lawyer in this country would think of putting a man upon his trial, and omit to tell him what he was charged with, any more than of filing a bill in equity, without letting the defendant know the complaint against him. But if the law officers of the Crown in Ireland had shown too little law in one instance, they had shown too much in another of the State prosecutions; for on the failure of a demurrer in a recent case tried at Dublin, they had prayed for immediate judgment on the prisoner. Who ever heard of sending a man to execution without trial, because a special pleader made a mistake? No doubt in civil cases when a demurrer was put in to a plea or declaration, the facts well pleaded were held to be admitted; and if the party demurring failed in his demurrer, he failed altogether; and the same rule in strictness applied theoretically in criminal cases. But what mortal being ever heard of taking a man at his pleader's word in actual practice, and hanging him because that pleader mistook the law? The court very properly overruled the attempt; but the attempt reflected no honour, no credit on the Government or the Crown lawyers, who had shown too little learning in the one case, and too much in the other. There was another reason why he must protest against the reduction of the national force below what necessity absolutely required—he alluded to the position of our affairs in India; and he believed there were some who heard him, men of long experience and proverbial sagacity, who had a very good inkling of what had since happened, as far back as last March. He feared we had sacrificed the advantage which we had obtained, by not taking possession of the Punjaub when we ought. He thought Her Majesty's Ministers had shown a wise discretion in not singing any *Io pœans* upon what had happened in the Punjaub; and he could have wished that the general officer in command of our forces there had evinced the same forbearance. When an officer in high command, copying the example of Lord Nelson, began his despatch with "It has pleased Almighty God to bless Her Majesty's arms," it should be a success, like that of the Nile, so great and so indisputable that there could be no doubt about it. Undoubtedly they were told, that good Christians should be thankful for small mercies, and that reverses ought even to be received with thankfulness as chastenings from the Divine hand. Viewed in this light, the general in command of the British forces in the late engagement seems to have commenced his despatch in some such words as these—"It has pleased Almighty God to permit me to be out-manœuvred by the enemy," than which thankful resignation nothing can be more exemplary or more edifying, though somewhat novel in war. The despatch, however, concluded by expressing a most proper hope that it might please Divine Providence to improve the victory, and to turn to good account what had been done—a safe wish to breathe, and in which all must join. Nothing could certainly give him more sincere pleasure than to hear the noble Lord who had so ably moved the Address, and who certainly had no reason to deprecate their Lordships' impatience, for no one had listened to the noble Lord with any impatience; nothing could give him greater satisfaction than to join the noble Lord in congratulating the country on the improved state of trade and commerce; and it was to be hoped that they might now enjoy a continuance and realisation of the cheering commercial prospect at present before them. He could only trust that when that prosperity came, our merchants and manufacturers might show more sober-mindedness than on former occasions of returning prosperity after distress. We were still ignorant of the laws which governed these reverses and alternations of commercial fortune. The Newton had not yet arisen, who could explain these mysterious cycles. But they knew generally the tendency towards repletion, after the channels of trade had been drained; and he hoped, when the crisis should have passed, that it would be found that the wisdom of our fellow-countrymen in the commercial and speculative classes would be improved by such repeated experience as they had had of the miseries of over-trading.

LORD BEAUMONT said, there was so much in the speech of the noble and learned Lord who had just sat down in which he agreed, that he regretted there should have been anything at all from which he felt compelled to dissent. The very circumstance, however, of his agreeing with the noble Lord on some points, imposed upon him the necessity of disagreeing with him in others; for he could not, like the noble and learned Lord, reconcile things totally contrary to each other, and in the same breath commend or recommend two lines of policy diametrically opposed to each other in principle. For instance, while he with the noble Lord commended and admired the Government for maintaining friendly relations with France, and keeping up the close intercourse between the two countries under all forms of government, he could not at the same moment, like the noble Lord, adopt the doctrine that it was the duty of the Minister of this country to attach himself exclusively to the absolute policy of Austria, and in every way to support her pretensions, because they were hostile and opposed to France. He also differed from the noble Lord on the question of Sicily, and could not refrain from expressing his surprise that the noble Lord should have so far overlooked the circumstances of the two countries as to compare the connexion between Sicily and Naples with our connexion with Ireland. The noble and learned Lord, contrary to his wonted practice, had forgotten altogether the history of Sicily, and excluded from his consideration of the subject the many treaties and transactions which had passed between this country and that island. Was it possible that he could be ignorant that for many centuries Sicily was a separate kingdom in every respect, enjoying separate privileges, a separate constitution, a national legislature, and all the rights of an independent country? Did not the noble Lord know that again and again the kingdom of Sicily had been separated from Naples in the person of the Crown? Had we adhered to treaties solemnly entered into, and which were supposed to bind nations, we should have been obliged to not merely adopt the mild and moderate policy of friendly negotiation which Her Majesty's Ministers had pursued, but to have insisted on the total and complete separation of the two countries, and have assisted Sicily in recovering her ancient independence. Going as far back as the Treaty of Utrecht, which treaty we still quoted as part of the obligations of Europe, we find Sicily separated from Naples, and the crown given to the house of Savoy. This separation was the solemn act of a treaty at which we were present; and a short time subsequent to that, England makes a distinct and separate treaty with Sicily as an independent kingdom, acknowledging thereby that she was no way bound to Naples. But it was not so much to those more distant periods that he wished to draw the noble Lord's attention; it was to the year 1812 that he would fain recall his memory. At that period Sicily was occupied by our troops, and the Royal family maintained and protected in the sovereignty of the island by us. The King attempted to infringe the ancient constitution of Sicily; and what was the course adopted by England? England not only prevented any invasion of the rights of Sicilians, but aided and protected them while they were engaged in reforming their ancient constitution, and developing their civil institutions in accordance with the progress of liberal opinions. In the constitution thus remodelled and reformed, occurred an article respecting the crown of Sicily which ran thus:—

> "Should the King of Sicily reconquer the kingdom of Naples, or acquire any other kingdom, he must send his eldest son to reign in the new dominions, or leave his son in Sicily, granting the kingdom of Sicily to him. Declaring hereafter the kingdom of Sicily independent of Naples, or of any other kingdom or province."

Thus ran Article 17, Chapter of the Succession. To this the King answered—

> "Placet, agreed for the independence, all other matters to be settled between the King and his son at the general peace, to know which of them ought to reign in Sicily."

Was it not, then, admitted in the very words of the constitution that the crowns should be for ever separated? And were not we present, if not parties to the constitution of 1812? Did not we look upon ourselves as bound to protect the Sicilians in their long-acquired liberties, and did we not put our honour in the fulfilment of the engagement between the King and his Sicilian subjects? He (Lord Beaumont) found this view of the question adopted in the subsequent despatches of Lord Castlereagh and Sir W. A'Court. In a letter addressed by the latter to the Sicilian Government, he found the following passage:—

> "England could not be insensible to the appeal which was made to her, and whilst she charged herself with the protection of Sicily from any foreign invader, she at the same time lent herself to the invitation she had received, and became the protectress and supporter of alterations founded upon principles so just in themselves, and so creditable to those from whom they had originally emanated."

Did not this confirm the opinion that we were bound to protect the constitution of 1812, if called on by the Sicilians, and to see its enactments fulfilled? If, therefore, we were to be guided in our policy by treaties and similar obligations, we should be forced to insist on a total separation of Sicily from Naples. With such treaties in force, and such solemn engagements still in existence, he could not understand upon what principle the noble Lord could draw a comparison between the case of Sicily and that of Ireland; for the one had always enjoyed a separate existence, been always entitled to a separate Government, and had its constitutional rights guaranteed by powerful foreign countries; while Ireland had by its own act and deed united itself to England, and never been in the position Sicily was in 1812 with regard to any foreign Power. Ireland lost no constitutional privileges, but merely made a legislative union of its own accord; whereas in Sicily it was by brute force that the Neapolitan Government succeeded in destroying the constitutional rights of the Sicilians, and establishing that frightful system of tyranny which had existed in the island ever since. The Sicilians petitioned to have a Parliament called together, and the petitioners were imprisoned. Sir W. A'Court protested in the name of England against the infringement of the constitution; and now that they were called on to negotiate, they should act up to that protest. So far from blaming the English Government for insisting on too much in their proposals to the King of Naples, he found fault with them for not going far enough in supporting those principles to which they had declared themselves bound in 1812, and in maintaining that constitution which, according to his reading of various treaties, they were bound to see carried out. It was said that the Treaty of Vienna secured the absolute government of the Two Sicilies to the King of Naples. He disputed that point, and maintained that in no article of that treaty was it laid down that the independence of Sicily should be destroyed. Sicily was not mentioned in the treaty, except as Ferdinand's title. The Article ran thus—

> "His Majesty, King Ferdinand IV., is re-established, for himself and his heirs, on the throne of Naples, and recognised by the Powers as King of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies."

Now in this there was nothing of destroying the constitution of 1812—nothing of making Sicily a province of Naples—nothing of releasing Ferdinand from all the obligations he had entered into. In every case where there was a change in the frontiers of ancient kingdoms, or a consolidation of States, or a union of two countries in one—a special article was introduced in the treaty, setting the plan out, and regulating the future relations of the united countries. But in the case of Sicily, nothing was said, things were left as they were; and since no alteration was proposed or stated at Vienna, the engagements of 1812 must have been understood to have held good. The constitution of 1812 ought, therefore, to be the basis of our negotiations; namely, total separation. It was with pain and surprise that he heard the noble and learned Lord blame the Admirals for the part they had acted before Messina. What was the conduct of the Admirals, which the noble Lord disapproved of? They took no part in the contest—they did not interfere with the military operations of the belligerents—they did not assist the Italian forces—but when the battle was over, when the Sicilian troops were withdrawn, when the town had surrendered to the Neapolitans, when all resistance had ceased, when the sick and the dying—the harmless portion of the population—the old men, women, and children were alone left in the place—they witnessed a scene which made them take on themselves a responsibility which it would have been an eternal disgrace to them to have declined to impose on themselves. For eight long hours they saw the Neapolitans bombard the helpless, defenceless, surrendered town; they saw the barbarian let loose his savage hordes upon the hopeless, helpless beings who could not escape from the burning town; they saw women and children abused and murdered; the sick and the old tortured; and all this in a town which had for many hours surrendered, and in which the enemy had not a single soldier left. It was then, and then only, that the Admirals, moved by a sense of their duty to common humanity, and to God, insisted that the useless massacre in the surrendered town should cease, and declared that if the Neapolitan commander had not sufficient control over his own troops, that they would interfere to establish order in Messina. It was evident the Neapolitan commander could not maintain discipline in his army; and they therefore restrained him from advancing on to enact similar scenes in other towns of Sicily. He honoured the French and English Admirals for the part they had taken, and he rejoiced to think the Governments of both countries had adopted the measure of their naval officers. What would have been said in after times if they had disavowed the generous acts of the two Admirals, and rebuked them for having saved from the brutality of a lawless soldiery, some hundreds of helpless women and children? The character of the war is enough to justify the interference of France and England in the question. It is held to be a sufficient ground of interference, when the conduct of the war assumes so brutal a nature, that some powerful neutral Power can alone prevent the belligerent forces from converting their contests into a succession of massacres—and we have more than once interfered on no better ground than the bloody character of the struggle. Witness our interference in Greece; again in the Plate, where the only attempt at an excuse for our folly in commencing hostilities, was to prevent more dreadful cruelties. Our interference in Sicily has not only a better excuse, or rather a better grounded excuse, but is luckily of a very different nature. We have not taken part in the military operations of either party, nor prevented those military operations from being carried on, so long as they were conducted on the principles of regular warfare; but we have availed ourselves of an armistice to renew negotiations to which we were invited. What concessions the mediators may find it advisable to impose on either party, it would be unwise at that moment to surmise; but if ancient and still-existing treaties are appealed to, we cannot well stop short of a total separation of Sicily from Naples. With regard to the other subject touched on by the noble and learned Lord, namely, the late war in the north of Italy, he would say but a very few words. He agreed with his noble and learned Friend that her Majesty's Government had displayed great discretion and ability in preventing the interference of the French south of the Alps. He also believed with his noble and learned Friend that it was a mistaken idea to imagine that France was not burning, and had not for some time been burning, with a desire to send her troops across the Alps for the purpose of supporting the liberal party in that quarter of the world. He certainly gave the Government of France credit for having restrained that feeling; but he was convinced that they could not have restrained it, if the people of that country had thought that England, instead of supporting France in striving to obtain justice and fair terms for the inhabitants of Italy, and to establish something like Italian independence, had resolved to aid in the re-establishment of the cruel Government which had lately existed in Lombardy, which had been purely German in its policy, and which had sedulously endeavoured to remove every trace of Italian nationality. But we had been invited to mediate between the parties at an early period of the war; and that invitation we had willingly accepted. More than one proposal had been made as the basis of negotiation between the contending parties; but it appeared that Austria in her proposals wished to retain more than could with justice, or a prospect of permanent peace, be conceded her. A suggestion had been made on our part, which might settle the question; but negotiations were at present pending on that subject, and he felt that it would not therefore be discreet on his part to discuss it in detail. All he should then say was, that he trusted that in those negotiations the vain and extravagant idea of establishing in Italy anything like an Austrian province, and an Austrian Government, under an Austrian archduke, would be altogether abandoned. They might rely on it, that if any attempt were made to force on the north of Italy the sway of Austria, that attempt would only lead to another of those outbreaks, which must be perpetually occurring until something like Italian independence was conceded once and for ever. Those were the only two subjects of foreign policy to which he meant to refer. There was one remark of his noble and learned Friend on a point of a different character, which he wished briefly to notice. His noble and learned Friend had said that the land tax was levied in different proportions on land, and on other property. But he believed his noble and learned Friend was mistaken in that matter. The amount had formerly been 24*s.* in the 100*l.*, the current rate of interest having been 6 per cent, and when the interest had fallen to 5 per cent, an Act had been passed reducing that amount to 20*s.* in the 100*l.*; so that the same proportion had always been preserved; that is to say, four shillings in the pound, whether the pound represents the rent of land, or the interest of money. In fact no difference was formerly made between personalty and realty—rates and taxes affected both equally.

The Earl of WINCHILSEA said, he could not help taking that opportunity of protesting against that part of Her Majesty's Speech which announced the determination of the Government to propose a reduction in our naval and military forces. He believed most conscientiously that if that course were adopted, a fatal injury would be inflicted on the best interests of the country. It appeared to him that such a proceeding would argue nothing less than infatuation; and he felt convinced, from his confidence in the wisdom of Her Majesty, and in Her anxious desire to promote the best interests of Her empire, that if She had been left to the dictates of Her own heart and understanding, She would never have recommended so dangerous a policy. He also felt bound to express his surprise that the Speech from the Throne contained no reference to the present deplorable condition of two great national interests—he meant the colonial interest and the agricultural interest of this great country. Our colonies were certainly in a position in which we could feel no pride; and with regard to the agricultural interest, it was his firm and honest conviction, from what had taken place within the last few months, that that interest was in a most perilous position, and that, if things were to go on as at present, before twelve months more fearful calamities would occur, involving the total overthrow of that great interest, on the prosperity of which that of the nation at large so much depended. But he should again warn their Lordships not to reduce the existing naval and military forces of the country. When he looked to the state of Europe, and saw the fearful convulsions which had already taken place, and which so far from having subsided, were only waiting for a more fitting opportunity to renew the conflict; when he saw the oldest established governments and monarchies overthrown—the revolutionary spirit which was abroad—and the dissemination of those principles which, if successful, as they were in 1791, must tend to overthrow all the social principles upon which society existed—he considered it nothing better than national insanity upon the part of this country, if at this moment she consented to a reduction of a single man either of the Army or Navy. The present state of Ireland was another reason why no such reduction should at present be made. A reduction of any part of our defences would lead only to the encouragement of that party which would never be satisfied until they had succeeded in breaking off the connexion with England, and establishing the independence of Ireland. He believed that any attempt to reduce the military or naval strength of the country would be fraught with the utmost danger to every interest in the united kingdom, and to England's peace and England's glory.

LORD STANLEY: My Lords, I certainly had hoped, and I must say I think your Lordships had expected, that after the able and powerful speech addressed to your Lordships immediately after the speeches of the Mover and Seconder of the Address by my noble and learned Friend who now sits near me (Lord Brougham), some one of Her Majesty's Ministers would have felt it to be his duty to offer some observations on those comments—those most important in substance and most eloquently expressed comments—which my noble and learned Friend made on various parts of the Speech which has been read from the Throne by Her Most Gracious Majesty. But, my Lords, I really believe that such is the simplicity of mind of Her Majesty's Ministers, and such is the art—the consummate art—of my noble and learned Friend, that Her Majesty's Ministers are actually under the impression that the observations which my noble and learned Friend made on their foreign policy were really intended to be of a laudatory character, expressing entire approbation of what they have done, and perfect confidence in that which they intend to do, and may do hereafter. [The Marquess of LANSDOWNE: Hear, hear!] The noble Marquess assents to that view of the matter, and believes that the tendency of my noble and learned Friend's observations was to approve of the foreign policy of Her Majesty's Government, and that my noble and learned Friend entertains a most confident opinion that the anticipations he has expressed on the subject will be verified by the production of the papers relating to that policy. I am sorry to dissipate so happy a delusion on the part of Her Majesty's Ministers. There is nothing more painful—there is nothing more irksome—than, after a very good joke has been made, to find that there is some person of so obtuse an intellect that, for the life and soul of him, he cannot make out the joke, and that somebody must afterwards laboriously explain the matter to him, telling him—"Why, such a person meant so and so, and can you not see the joke? Do you not see that he was not in earnest?" A new light is thus made to break on the unfortunate innocent who was the object of the joke, and he finds that what he took *en grand seigneur*, as a high compliment, was, in reality, a jest made at his expense, as every one except himself had at once perceived. It certainly appears to me that such was very much the character of the observations addressed by my noble and learned Friend to Her Majesty's Government on their foreign policy. And I am much mistaken if, when my noble and learned Friend declares that he has no doubt that when these papers are produced we shall find that Her Majesty's Government had, in all things, sedulously respected the obligations of treaties, sedulously and cautiously and scrupulously abstained from interfering in the slightest degree with the internal and domestic affairs of other countries—above all, that they had repudiated the idea of nationality and independence of Italy—that they had given no countenance to those persons who, putting forward the most unfounded pretensions, sought to get rid of the most well-founded claims to dominion on the part of other Powers—and especially that they had sedulously and carefully abstained from giving to our most ancient and most faithful ally, Austria, the slightest reason for supposing that by one hair's breadth we had deviated from the strict observance of those obligations to which the faith of treaties, policy, justice, and honour alike bound us—I am much mistaken if my noble and learned Friend, when he was stating this, had not already in his mind anticipated that surprise and dismay which I have no doubt he will most eloquently and powerfully express to yours Lordships on the production of those papers, when he finds that the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government has in reality been at variance with that which at the present moment he states that he presumes it impossible but that they must have adopted. My Lords, for my own part, I am at all times most unwilling to interfere by any observations of mine, and still more by any amendment, with that unanimity which I think, under ordinary circumstances, it is most desirable should prevail, in tendering to the Throne, in answer to the Speech delivered by Her Majesty, the expression of loyalty on our parts, and of a respectful reception of the recommendations and the observations which it may have pleased Her Majesty to make. I must also observe, that it has been generally the policy of all Governments—and I should have thought it would in an especial manner have been the policy of a Government which has been, as I think they must admit, treated with no ordinary forbearance during their tenure of office by their political opponents—to whom more than usual allowance has been made for the difficulties in which they were placed, the magnitude of which we did not disguise from ourselves or from the country, and with regard to which we were free to admit that the whole of those difficulties were not of their own creating—my Lords, I should have thought that a Government so situated would be careful to abstain in the Speech which they advised the Crown to deliver, from every statement which could provoke cavil, from every observation which could lead to controversy, and, above all, from every representation of the state of the country which could bear on the face of it the character of exaggeration, or of a tendency to mislead. My Lords, when I look to this Speech, unsatisfactory as I find it from first to last, I can hardly discover one paragraph in it which is not open to hostile comment, or one statement which does not give, to my judgment, an incorrect view of the fact which it professes to represent. I confess I am at a loss, entirely at a loss, to arrive at the conclusion to which that Speech has come, with the premises which it has laid down, as well as with the facts, which from your experience must be within the knowledge of your Lordships. Above all, in my judgment, that Speech does greatly exaggerate that which the Government is pleased to consider, and that which my noble and learned Friend has also described, the present prosperity of this country. I believe that, although there may be some trifling amendment, and it is but trifling, in the commercial prosperity of this country—I do believe that, although the state of the revenue is more promising than it was at the period of the commencement of the last Session of Parliament; yet, I confess, I am at a loss, to whatever quarter I look, to find what subject of congratulation there is in the state of our foreign relations, or of our domestic condition generally. My Lords, for the first time since I have had the honour of a seat in Parliament it has not been in the power of Her Most Gracious Majesty to introduce those words into Her Speech which are usually and ordinarily used on similar occasions — namely, that She continues to receive those assurances of friendly relations from foreign Powers which are the best guarantee for general peace. My Lords, I cordially concur in many paragraphs of that Speech, particularly in that with respect to the tranquillity and loyalty of the people of this country during the prevalence and continuance of the trials and vicissitudes to which other nations have been subjected. I rejoice that the Government—for, of course, the Speech is the sentiment of the Government — has thought proper to put such a paragraph therein, and that they should call upon your Lordships—a call to which I know you will respond, and that you will cordially aid Her Majesty to the utmost of your power, in "upholding the fabric of the constitution, founded as it is upon the principles of freedom and justice." I am grateful, deeply grateful, to Her Majesty for another announcement in the earlier portion of Her Speech, in which She declares, not that She has received assurances of friendly relations from foreign Powers, but that "it is Her constant desire to maintain with all foreign States the most friendly relations." I am deeply grateful for that announcement, because it relieves my mind, as I hope it does the minds of your Lordships, from the apprehension that it was the desire of the Ministers of the Crown to maintain the most unfriendly relations with other Powers, in consequence of their constant, uncalled-for, and mischievous intermeddling in the affairs of every country in Europe. My Lords, I ask Her Majesty's Government to tell me of what country in Europe they could venture to insert in the Speech the declaration that they could rely with confidence upon the friendly feelings of the Sovereign of that country? I ask, my Lords, have we renewed our diplomatic relations with the Court of Spain? With regard to the Court of Spain, the state of your relations, or rather your nominal relations with that Court, is this—you have, I think most unwisely, through your Minister, interfered in the internal administration and affairs of that country. The offence, if it were an offence, on the part of our Minister towards that country, has been visited by the Government of that country upon that Minister and upon this country by an act in itself so offensive, that, great as was the provocation which was given on the part of the British Minister, yet, with the information we possess, I believe no one could stand up and say that the Government of Spain was justified in the course they pursued, or that the offence, however great it may have been, was sufficient to justify their conduct. The state of affairs in Spain is this — that your Minister has been ignominiously driven from Madrid, and that you have passively and quietly acquiesced in that insult which a foreign Government has put upon you. Will you venture to say that you are on friendly relations with the King of Naples? Will you say that you are on friendly relations with the Government of Austria? Have you given to the Government of Austria reason to entertain friendly relations towards you? Have you reason to believe that the Government of Austria does entertain friendly relations towards you? I ask, are you or are you not the only Power in Europe to whom the Government of Austria has not officially, by the mission of an Ambassador, signified the accession of the present Sovereign to the Throne? And, more than that, has that omission or has it not been accompanied by any intimation that the cause of that omission, as respects you, and as respects you alone, was the unfriendly attitude which the Government of this country had assumed towards the Government of Austria? Are you on friendly relations with the Court of Rome, or with the Sovereign of the Roman States? You were in great haste last year to enter into diplomatic relations with the Court of Rome, and to enter into friendly relations with the Sovereign of the Roman States. But what is now the state of your relations with them? Have you not, with respect to the affairs of all the foreign countries I have named — have you not, with regard to the Italian provinces, Spain, Austria, Naples, and Sicily — taken precisely that very step which a most illustrious author, an able man and Minister, has declared to be that which, above all other things, a Government cannot safely undertake — have you not fomented underhand the spirit of disaffection, and have you not at last vainly attempted to struggle with the creature of your own creation? Have you not fostered a spirit of disaffection, and then vainly sought to quell it? I think, my Lords, that in the course of the last Session of Parliament, I ventured to express, with every respect for the motives and amiable disposition of the Sovereign Pontiff, my doubts as to whether he was wise or far-seeing in the march which he was then pursuing, or would be able to check the progress of that revolution to which, with the best and most praiseworthy feelings, he was then giving rise. Did I not tell you that with regard to Italy to Naples, to Rome, and Florence, the intervention of the noble Earl (the Lord Privy Seal) might be of very great importance in affording encouragement to liberal intitutions, yet that the Sovereigns of those States should be careful that they were able to stem any excess of public feeling, if they lent themselves to the advice of the noble Earl? Amongst them there was none whose moderation was spoken of in higher terms than the Sovereign Pontiff; and what has been the result of the encouragement he has given to liberal institutions? That encouragement was fostered and supported by the special mission of a Cabinet Minister of Her Britannic Majesty; and the consequences have been, that the head of the Roman Catholic Church—the undoubted sovereign of the Roman inheritance—has been wholly unable to stem the torrent, having broken down the dam in the first instance by your assistance and support, and that at this moment he is an exile from his dominions, and that those dominions are under the control and management (if indeed any control there prevails) of no regular or systematic Government, but of a body, call it what you will, the avowed and open advocates of foul and atrocious murder. What has been the result of your intervention in Naples and Sicily? I am not about to follow the noble Lord who has just sat down (Lord Beaumont) through an historical statement of the relations between this country, Sicily, and Naples; but I cannot help saying that it would be more to the purpose if the noble Lord, in commenting upon the obligations which this country had assumed, had commenced his observations at a later period, and applied himself to the present state of things. We are not to deal either with Naples or with Sicily, for, by any guarantee that has been given, they are not separate and independent States. We cannot deal with Naples or with Sicily; but we have treaties of alliance with the King of the Two Sicilies, and with him, and with him alone, in that capacity, is it competent for the English Government to confer. I took the liberty of asking the Government, last year, for some intimation of the principles upon which it was their intention to tender their intervention in the affairs of Sicily, there being, at the time, some apprehensions entertained with regard to the proceedings of Her Majesty's Government. There was a very general belief that the British and French squadrons would, by the orders of their Governments, prevent the sailing of the expedition of the King of Naples to recover possession of Sicily, and I made an inquiry on the subject, but no answer was given to me. However, in point of fact, no interference did take place; the armament did sail from Naples, and was uninterrupted, though followed by a British squadron. But far better would it have been, in my judgment, if that humanity which is so prominently put forward in Her Majesty's Speech, not indeed as a vindication, but as a palliation, of the manifest infraction of the law of nations—far better, I say, would it have been, if the Government had so interfered, and prevented the sailing of the squadron, rather than interfere at the time and in the manner in which they did subsequently interfere. The like has been the case in every country in which we have interfered, alternately giving encouragement and support to each of the contending parties, so that those who professed and fought for liberal opinions, and those who vindicated the views of the Government and the maintenance of its authority, have each in turn been led to believe that they might count upon the support, or at least count upon the neutrality of the British Government. The result has been, that each in turn has found itself deceived and betrayed by the Government which they have trusted. The horrors of civil war have been prolonged and aggravated to an incalculable degree by the policy of the British Government; and your reward, your just, equitable, unfailing, certain reward, must be, and has been, that you are distrusted and condemned by both parties. As regards the intervention of the French and British admirals, I have learned, with some astonishment, from the language of Her Majesty's Speech, that it is upon the unauthorised acts of the French and British admirals, the burden of the responsibility of that intervention is laid. At the period of that intervention, the Sicilian struggle was virtually over. The King of Naples had taken possession of Messina, the stronghold of the insurgents, and their cause was hopeless when the intervention of the British Government stopped the Neapolitan forces. They did not simply stop the effusion of blood; but if we believe the statements that are made, they took upon themselves to stop the Neapolitan army in the full tide of its success, and prevented that army from prosecuting its operations. But after that intervention had taken place, and that prohibition—that unwarrantable prohibition to continue the war had been announced—the strict neutrality professed by Her Majesty's Government, and which, at all events, it was their duty to maintain, I fear it will be found was not in point of fact observed by the British squadron. I fear it will appear, if all the papers connected with this transaction are laid before us, that all the moral influence of the British arms and power was thrown in Sicily into the scale of the insurgents, and against the monarch with whom we had treaties. I hope it is not true that any British officer should be so far forgetful of his duty as to appear in public holding a tri-coloured flag, and that he should have said the cause of Sicily was the cause of England and of France; and that they might rely on their support. I shall rejoice to hear that no officer has been so forgetful of his duty as to join in public clamour and in *vivas* for the independence of Sicily. I confess I heard with some surprise from the noble Lord opposite (Lord Beaumont), and I hope I shall not hear from any other noble Lord, the cry raised in this House for the independence of Italy—that phantom which I thought had long since vanished into thin air—or such a sentiment as that the government of Austria in the Milanese was a brutal government that ought to be denounced. Setting aside all our connexions and the ties of friendship with Austria, placing the Government of Austria on the merits of its administration, I believe that the administration of that Government may challenge comparison with the administration of any Government in Europe, however free or liberal the institutions of that Government may be. The noble Earl, in moving the Address, referred to the paragraph of Her Majesty's Speech in which Her Majesty said—

> "It was satisfactory to her to be enabled to state, that both in the north and in the south of Europe, the contending parties had consented to a suspension of arms for the purpose of negotiating terms of peace."

With regard to that paragraph, it is not very clear who are the contending parties who have agreed to a suspension of hostilities. No distinction is drawn between the consent to the suspension in the north, and the consent to the suspension in the south. With regard to Denmark suspending hostilities under your direction and control, this statement is not accurate. With regard to Austria it is undoubtedly false. It is false that there is any suspension of hostilities between Austria and Turin, except that which was so eloquently and humorously adverted to by my noble Friend—that the King of Sardinia has been foiled in his most unjust aggression. There is, as far as I know, no suspension of hostilities between the Sovereign Pontiff and his subjects at Rome. But now, with regard to this negotiation, by what principle, by what right, are you entering upon any negotiation whatever? What is the object of that negotiation? As regards Austria and Lombardy, what have you to negotiate for? From those provinces, to which Austria has an undoubted right, the King of Sardinia has been driven, and the war there is virtually at an end. Are you going to carry your love of liberal principles so far in the person of Charles Albert as that, having refused to mediate at a time when Austria was anxious for your mediation, now, when the success of Austria is complete, without the consent of Austria you are about to negotiate and to propose terms of mediation, by which the King of Sardinia should derive some advantage from his most unprincipled aggression? The King of Naples has not asked for our assistance. All he desires is simply to be left alone. It was not an unreasonable request his Majesty made, that he should be allowed to manage his own dominions without our meddling interference. We have no more right to be interfering between Naples and Sicily than the King of Naples has to intermeddle in our affairs. But, in spite of the protest of the King of Naples, we are going, it appears, to effect what we conceive to be a just and equitable solution of the question, having already given a rather premature intimation of our views when we sanctioned the offer of the throne of Sicily to the son of the King of Sardinia. I will not ask whether, in the threatened negotiations, the King of Naples is to be insulted with the proposition that Sicily is to be governed by a Sicilian assembly, and garrisoned by a Sicilian army—I will not believe that you can have the effrontery to offer such terms to an independent Sovereign as the solution of this question, until I actually see evidence of it in the black and white of official documents. But suppose for a moment that you have offered your terms, whatever they may be, will you enforce those terms upon unwilling parties? Do you mean to compel the King of Naples to accept the terms which you may dictate to him, whether he will or no; and on the other hand, if the Sicilian insurgents refuse your terms, will you enforce those terms upon them with the strong hand? Why not in the first place leave them alone to settle their own affairs? Well, my Lords, in my judgment the whole of the foreign policy of the kingdom is in a most unsatisfactory state. No one foreign Government are you in relations of friendship with—if you are not involved in quarrel with them, at all events an unfortunate feeling of distrust exists, and if it has not grown into a feeling of hostility, it is not due to your administration of the foreign affairs of the country, but to the wise forbearance and good sense of the foreign Governments. But true there is one Government, if Government it can be called—there is one country—one Power with which I believe you are on friendly terms. I believe at this moment you are on friendly terms with France—a country which I shall again say, as I have often done before, I look upon the maintenance of a good understanding with—I mean my Lords, that in my opinion a good understanding between this country and France is at all times, and especially at the present moment, essential to the maintenance of the general peace of Europe; and whatever the Government may be—and, my Lords, I may have better hopes of a friendly alliance between the two countries under one Government than I may entertain under another, but I do not consider this the time to enter into that question; but I say, under whatever Government France may at the moment be placed, I hold that it is of the utmost importance that friendly relations should be maintained between that Government and the Government of this country. But, my Lords, how has this state of things been brought about? Why, by a cautious and prudent avoidance of any interference in the internal affairs of France—by leaving France to settle the form of her own government. We had not interfered with France either by negotiation or advice. But, my Lords, if we now have friendly relations with France, who, possessed of common sense, will dare to predict what may be the state of affairs in France in a month, in a week, nay, my Lords, in a day? Who will say we shall be able to maintain amicable relations with France for any given period? Well, my Lords, passing from that subject, what is the next statement which I find put into the Speech from the Throne by Her Majesty's Ministers. Her Majesty says, "That a rebellion of formidable character has broken out in the Punjaub, and the Governor General of India has been compelled to assemble a considerable force, which is now engaged in military operations against the insurgents;" and then, with strange inconsistency, while they announce the rebellion in the Punjaub, they declare that "the tranquillity of British India has not been affected by these unprovoked disturbances." Now, my Lords, if I understand the English language, a rebellion is a rising, an outbreak of a people against the government of their legitimate ruler. In terms you exclude the Punjaub from the Queen's dominions in British India. You have never claimed it. I do not venture to express an opinion as to whether policy may render it desirable, or necessity may make it unavoidable, to annex the Punjaub to our territories in India. But at the present moment the Punjaub is no portion of the British dominions; and although it is true that there has been a rising in the Punjaub, it is not true that a rebellion has broken out in that country. I say, my Lords, that a war has broken out there—a war of a formidable character has broken out in the Punjaub, and one which is, at this moment, calling for not only the forces possessed by the East India Company, but for an augmentation—a large augmentation of that aid which is usually furnished to the India Company by Her Majesty's service in the shape of military assistance. Then, my Lords, I shall call your attention very shortly to that paragraph which relates to Ireland. With respect to Ireland, we are told in the Speech that the insurrection has not been renewed, but the disaffection still exists, and it compels Her Majesty with reluctance to call for a renewal of those large and stringent powers which the Legislature entrusted to the Government last Session. I know not where my noble Friend who moved the Address found his reasons for congratulation upon the state of Ireland. It is true, as he said, that last year the storm was gathering; the storm, not very formidable in its results, certainly did burst. The deluge has taken place, and it has been repressed by the strong arm of military force, and by nothing else; and I tell you, my Lords, that the moment you reduce that military strength—the moment you reduce your power to crush that spirit—the moment you take off the pressure—that storm is ready to burst out again, for the spirit of disaffection is still rife in that country. The Speech from the Throne authorises me to say so much, and my own knowledge tells me that although an unsuccessful, a premature, and an impotent attempt at a great rebellion has been put down, it has been done without producing in the minds of the great body of the people of Ireland any degree of hopelessness, still less any sense of the criminality and guilt, of the rebellion. With respect to our foreign relations, then, it appears that we are upon amicable terms only with France; with respect to India, we are engaged in a formidable war there, and in two or three of our colonies insurrection has already broken out, which it will require a considerable body of troops to quell. I regret to see that in some other of our colonial possessions the feeling of exasperation at the treatment which they have experienced from the Imperial Legislature has engendered a spirit amounting now to discontent, but which is fast ripening into disaffection; and, as they despair of obtaining relief from the mother country, no one can be bold enough to predict the result. Lastly, we have Ireland almost universally disaffected—a country in which the ordinary process between man and man can be enforced by military power alone. In the face of all this Ministers have had the confidence to place in the mouth of their Sovereign the astounding declaration that the aspect of affairs is such as to enable them to effect large reductions in the estimates. My Lords, in my opinion, it is not the aspect of affairs abroad, nor the aspect of affairs in the colonies, nor the aspect of affairs in Ireland, which has caused the estimates to be reduced—no, my Lords, it is the aspect of affairs in another and a very different sense; I believe it is, that they have been ordered to be made by a power which the Government dare not withstand. I have no doubt, my Lords, that reductions may be effected in some of the civil departments of the Army—in the civil department of the Ordnance, and in the civil affairs of the Navy; and large reductions might be effected by a proper system of checking the payment of wages in the dockyards, and looking after the great abuses which exist in the administration and management of the dockyards. But the greatest security we could obtain for having the work well done in the dockyards would be the passing of an enactment to deprive all persons employed in those yards from voting for Members of Parliament. I have heard at least twenty naval officers express an opinion on that—until persons employed in the dockyards shall be prevented from voting for Members of Parliament, it will be impossible to exercise efficient control over the work performed in those establishments. If reductions can be effected, in God's name let them be made; and, although one may wonder why such a course has been so long delayed, I will applaud the Government which shall economise without prejudice to the permanent interests of the empire. But when the country is in such a state as to require to have all its resources and all its powers at hand and in readiness, I, for one, cannot concur with those who seem to think it is a wise economy largely to reduce our establishments, although probably it may be a politic economy. It is also announced by Her Majesty's Government that it is their intention to take some steps with regard to the relief of the poor in Ireland. A more important or a more difficult question cannot engage the attention either of Her Majesty's Government or of the Legislature. If I understand the purpose of the Government, it is to make that subject a matter of further inquiry. If it be the intention of the Government to appoint a Committee of either or both Houses—if they intend especially to appoint a Committee of this House, and lay before that Committee a clear and distinct statement of their views for the amendment of the law, and the details of the law to which they would invite the attention of all parties—I shall have no objection to such a course of proceeding, and I am sure there will be no lukewarmness—no partiality—shown in the investigation of the subject on either side of the House. But if the intention of the Government be to throw the consideration of the question loose upon Parliament—to make no statement of their intentions—if it be the object of the Government to throw the whole question before a Committee in order that they may inquire into that which has already been inquired into *usque ad nauseam*—I must enter my protest against such a proceeding. Considering the powers of a branch of the Government instituted expressly for the purpose of working the poor-law, and which is able from its position to obtain more accurate information than any Committee can—seeing that we have a Lord Lieutenant of Ireland who, I am glad to have the opportunity of saying, is always anxious properly to discharge the duty of his high station—one who is always accessible to men of all parties, and consequently enjoys peculiar advantages of obtaining knowledge and advice upon so important a subject from men of all parties—if such a question is to be thrown loose upon Parliament and the inquiry of a Committee, I shall say Her Majesty's Government shrink from the responsibility properly attaching to a Government, and do not properly perform the duty which they owe to their country and their Sovereign. The Speech from the Throne also calls your Lordships' attention to the "restrictions imposed upon commerce by the navigation laws," as they are pleased to phrase it. I do not feel it necessary upon the present occasion to enter at any length into the question of the navigation laws; not because I do not hold this subject to be one of the greatest importance, but because of the introduction into both the Speech and the Address, with reference to this topic, of that happy peacemaker "if." As the Address says, "If it can be shown that these laws are in whole or in part unnecessary for the maintenance of our maritime power," or that they "fetter trade and industry," I, for one, shall be perfectly ready and willing to repeal or modify them. With the "if," I am quite prepared to agree to the Answer to the Speech which is proposed; but I cannot do so without declaring my fixed opinion, founded upon all the inquiries I have been able to make —and I have given the subject the patient attention which its importance demands—as being entirely contrary to the allegations of the Speech as put into the mouth of Her Majesty by the Government. My firm belief is, that the navigation laws are indispensable for the maintenance of your maritime prosperity, and that they do not impede commerce, or for a moment interfere with the mercantile supremacy of this country. I now come to the last portion of the Speech from the Throne. Though I dissent from many of the statements contained in the Address relative to the topics to which I have already adverted, I do not feel myself called upon to propose any Amendment to the Address; but the portion of the Royal Speech to which I am about to refer contains so exaggerated and erroneous a view of the actual condition of the country, that, reluctant as I am to disturb the unanimity which it is desirable should prevail upon such an occasion, I feel myself under the necessity of proposing an Amendment to the Address which refers to this part of the Speech from the Throne. Her Majesty said in Her most gracious Speech:—

> "I have great satisfaction in stating that commerce is reviving from those shocks which at the commencement of last Session I had to deplore. The condition of the manufacturing districts is likewise more encouraging than it has been for a considerable period. It is also gratifying to me to observe that the state of the revenue is one of progressive improvement."

I cannot join in thanking Her Majesty for making a communication on the state of the country, as it appears to Her through the eyes of Her Ministers, because I do not think the statement conveys accurate information relative to the condition of commerce, manufactures, and the revenue of the country. True, the panic which prevailed in November, 1847, has passed by, but those are strangely mistaken who suppose that its results on the commerce of the country have ceased to be felt. The few documents to which I am able to refer will show that the favourable view which Ministers take of the state of the country is erroneous. The noble Lord who opened this discussion spoke in sanguine terms of the progressive increase of the revenue. With deference to the noble Lord, I deny that there has been any progressive amendment of the revenue—it has not been progressive. I say, my Lords, it has been immediate, and within a limited period. I say that it has arisen from a single cause; and that you are now about to sweep that cause away. The improvement you boast of, you are about, with your eyes open, to check. I find that the revenue of the last year—I am speaking now of the ordinary revenue of the country —exceeded by 900,000*l.* the revenue of the preceding year. There is an excess of revenue for customs to the amount of 900,000*l.*, but there is a falling-off in other branches. There is an apparent increase in the excise to the amount of 1,100,000*l.*, but I apprehend that is in consequence of the transfer to that department of the stamps and taxes. The precise increase in the revenue of last year was occasioned by the customs duties paid on the importation of foreign corn. This revenue was raised without suffering on the part of the people, for moderate prices have prevailed during the time it has been flowing in, and yet you are this very day about to cut off the source from which you obtained last year a surplus over the preceding one. My Lords, there is another matter, which, although the item it relates to is small, yet it is by no means unimportant. I allude to the article of property tax. I find that there has been a diminution in the property tax during the last year, to the amount of 103,000*l.* —that quarter by quarter, in 1848, the property tax diminished, until it reached that amount. Now, my Lords, I think I am right in saying that every diminution under the head of property tax, is an indication of the loss of capital upon which that tax is levied; and consequently this diminution of 103,000*l.* indicates a loss or destruction of British capital, in 1848, to the amount of nearly 3,500,000*l.* My Lords, I cannot see that Her Majesty's Government have any greater reason to boast of the prosperous condition of our manufactures than of our revenue. I find by the papers on the table, which are periodically published by the Board of Trade, that the exports of our chief manufactures during eleven months of the last year, as compared with eleven months of the year preceding, had considerably diminished. I will take six of the leading articles we manufacture —cottons, woollens, linens, silks, hardware, and earthenware—and I find that instead of there being an improvement in those branches of trade, there was a diminution in the value of the exports of the articles, as compared with 1847, to the extent of 4,000,000*l.*, and as compared with 1846, a diminution of 5,200,000*l.* These exports had fallen from 37,000,000*l.* in 1846, to 32,000,000*l.* and a fraction in 1848. There is another important fact which is likewise an indication that our manufacturing and commercial conditions are not quite so prosperous as has been represented—I allude to the amount of deposits in the savings banks. I have conversed lately with several noble Lords and Gentlemen connected with different parts of the country, and from one and all I heard, without exception, that the withdrawal of deposits during the last year exceeded considerably the withdrawals of the year preceding; and I find that in the great manufacturing town of Manchester, the excess of withdrawals over deposits in 1848 amounted to between 40,000*l.* and 50,000*l.* Under these circumstances I think I am justified in saying that the Speech from the Throne gives a more favourable view of the commerce, manufactures, and revenue, than is warranted by the actual condition of the country. My Lords, I have entered into these details because I feel very strongly that the whole tone and general character of Her Majesty's Speech, especially those parts of it which refer to the manufacturing interests and financial position of the country, are not warranted by the facts of the case. But I have to allege sins of omission as well as of commission against the Royal Speech. My Lords, it certainly does appear to me rather strange, that Her Majesty's Ministers, who are usually considered responsible for any Speech delivered from the Throne, and who profess to have regard to the social condition of this country — it does appear to me rather strange—whether it arises from indifference, or that the subject is unworthy of their notice, I cannot pretend to say—that they should pass by interests which, to say the least of them, do not yield in magnitude or importance to commerce or manufactures—I mean our agricultural and colonial interests. Go where you will, go to what authority you please, and the fact will not be denied—it will not be denied even by Her Majesty's Ministers — that those interests are at the present moment labouring under deep and serious depression. Why then, I ask, do you not take notice of those which are the great fundamental interests of every country, but especially of a great maritime country like England? Why do you not express that which you cannot but feel with regard to those interests, instead of passing them by with contemptuous and indifferent silence? My Lords, I fear that the recent measures of the Government are going far to perpetuate and to increase the distress which unhappily prevails amongst those connected with agriculture and the colonies. My belief is, that we have entered upon a mistaken course of policy; and although my noble and learned Friend (Lord Brougham) supported the unhappy corn law, I am rejoiced that the landed interest and the colonies are now about to receive his powerful aid in advocating their just cause. My noble and learned Friend very properly views with constitutional jealousy that combination which, having already proved its power, is, as I anticipated would be the case, not satisfied with the repeal of the corn laws, but has declared its intention to make an onslaught on the landed interest and the great colonial interests of the empire. I rejoice at the admission of my noble and learned Friend, that he had, on a former occasion, winked at the unconstitutional proceedings of the League; and I trust that, warned by experience, my noble and learned Friend, and your Lordships generally, will bear in mind that for the attainment of no object, however desirable in itself, is it wise, honourable, or safe to avail yourselves of unconstitutional means. My noble and learned Friend professes himself to be still the advocate of free trade; and with equal frankness I avow that, whilst I do not advocate any unnecessary restrictions on commerce, I am the uncompromising enemy of the miscalled, one-sided, bastard free trade, which has been introduced by the Government for the benefit of foreigners, and to the detriment of British subjects; and I declare myself to be the uncompromising advocate of the old, just, and equitable principle which gave necessary protection, not monopoly, to the labourers and producers of this country, and to our fellow-countrymen, wherever they were to be found throughout the world. I am not favourable to prohibitory duties; but I maintain that it is necessary to give to our fellow-countrymen that amount of protection which is necessary to counterbalance any disadvantages which may arise from the admission of foreign produce. I hear it said, that free trade has been adopted, and that we must proceed in that course—*vestigia nulla retrorsum.* From that doctrine I dissent. It appears to me that the principle of protection to British industry is a sound and rational one. I will not consent to take it as a *fait accompli* that protection to British industry must be abandoned. Every day's experience convinces me more and more that this country will never prosper—that you will never be able to thwart the dangerous designs of mischievous men who think they have obtained a lever to upheave and uproot the old foundations of the constitution; that if you wish to see prosperity return to the interests of the country, agricultural as well as manufacturing—and when I speak of the agricultural interest, I mean not that of country gentlemen alone, but of the farmers and labourers of England—every day's experience convinces me that you must retrace the steps you have taken; you must make part of your revenue depend on a moderate import duty; you must return to the principle of protection. Such is my conviction; but my belief, moreover, is strong that to that conclusion within no distant period the full and deliberate opinion of the country will compel you to come. The price to which I ventured to predict that free trade would bring down your corn was 45*s.*; and I further ventured to affirm that you would have introduced, one year with another, four millions of quarters of corn. It is a singular circumstance, that the price of grain is at the present moment 45*s.* and a fraction; and there has been imported in the year about five millions of quarters of corn. If those prices are to be permanent, it is impossible that the agriculture of the country can be carried on with profit to the farmer; and if so, the loss will fall on the labourer, and on all who are connected with the agricultural interest. There is a significant fact obvious at this moment—I ask, whether it is not within your knowledge, more especially of the southern counties, that, in spite of those low prices which were to bring universal plenty and contentment, there is a larger amount of vagrancy, a greater prevalence of mendicancy, a larger number of ablebodied agricultural labourers thrown on the poor-rates; and whether the poor-rates, pressing exclusively on the land, are not becoming a more intolerable burden than for many years? If such be the case, it is not honest to sink the fact; and, believing that in this Speech you have given an erroneous colouring to the state of matters, that you have omitted, not perhaps unaccountably, but most censurably, all mention of interests in a condition approaching even to ruin—I need not allude to the West Indian colonies—I think it proper to submit a Motion by which, as I think, a more correct picture will be afforded of the true state of things, namely, to insert at the conclusion of that paragraph of the Address, which says that "the state of the revenue is one of progressive improvement," the following words:—

> "We regret, however, to be compelled humbly to represent to Your Majesty, that neither Your Majesty's Relations with Foreign Powers, nor the State of the Revenue, nor the Condition of the Commercial or Manufacturing Interests, are such as in our opinion to justify us in addressing Your Majesty in the language of congratulation; and that large Portions of the Agricultural and Colonial Interests of the Empire are labouring under a State of progressive Depression calculated to excite serious Apprehension and Anxiety."

The MARQUESS of LANSDOWNE said, that had it not been for the speech of the noble Lord who had just sat down, he would have been perfectly content to rest the grounds of his vote in favour of the Address that had been moved that night upon the speeches of the two noble Lords who had moved and seconded it. Those speeches were both remarkable for having been delivered by noble Lords who had never addressed their Lordships before, but who had shown themselves well qualified to take part in their deliberations; and he was sure that no person could have listened to either of those two speeches, without being convinced that the noble Lords who had delivered them were possessed of powers of eloquence and of argument such as were not always possessed by those who most frequently addressed the House. A more clear or more distinct statement, in favour of every topic contained in that Address, than that which had been brought forward by his noble Friend who had moved the Address on this occasion, he (the Marquess of Lansdowne) had never before had the pleasure of listening to in that House; and, as he had said before, he would have been perfectly willing to rest his vote in favour of the Motion upon the strength of the arguments embodied in the speech to which he had referred, and would certainly not have, in so doing, intended to evince the slightest degree of discourtesy or disrespect towards any one of their Lordships who thought proper to differ with him in the manner in which he intended to vote. But after what had fallen from the noble Lord who had last addressed the House, he (the Marquess of Lansdowne) felt it necessary to make a few observations. The noble Lord who had just sat down, was pleased to conjecture that this silence had been occasioned by the supposition on his (the Marquess of Lansdowne's) part, that the speech of the noble and learned Lord (Lord Brougham) was favourable to the Address, and to the policy which it recommended. Such was the simplicity with which the noble Lord had been pleased to charge him. But he did certainly think the noble Lord had shown as much simplicity when he considered, as he (the Marquess of Lansdowne) well knew at the time, and expected he would consider, the speech of the noble and learned Lord, which went so much further in approbation, and therefore so much less far in disapprobation, of the Address, to be in favour of the sentiments he himself had just expressed. Yet, although he congratulated himself upon having secured the assistance and approbation of the noble and learned Lord in favour of what he was pleased to call the landed interest, that noble and learned Lord had taken the opportunity already of reminding him that he must not congratulate himself on having secured his assistance in going backwards to protection, which he had just announced to their Lordships to be the great object of his policy. In that respect, at least, he could not assure him of having found much encouragement or assistance from the learned Lord. With regard to the silence alluded to by the noble Lord, and his own reasons for abstaining for the while from offering himself to the attention of their Lordships, he would say, that the noble Lord had availed himself, as undoubtedly he was well competent to do, of that opportunity, and the terms of the Address, in order to state an opinion, and to found that opinion on assumed facts, at a moment when, in the very terms of the Speech, it had been announced that the whole of the papers would be very shortly laid upon the table. He must be permitted to say, that the noble Lord could not, for his purpose, have ever adopted a more propitious time. If the noble Lord had waited for these papers, there was no one of the assertions which he had hazarded in his speech, and which he had made the foundation of that opinion which he invited their Lordships to adopt there, not one of these assertions which would not have been found falsified. And was it right, then, in him to avail himself of that occasion to pronounce an opinion which he sought to attach in the minds of their Lordships and of the public, by making those assertions and deriving those deductions? In proceeding to reply to the speech of the noble Lord, he would take it up in the order which the noble Lord himself had pursued. First, with respect to the noble Lord's remarks on the subject of foreign policy; he (the Marquess of Lansdowne) could not find where the noble Lord had discovered it to be stated, in the Speech from the Throne, that hostilities had, by means of the British Government, been suspended between Austria and Hungary. He assured them that, as regarded the internal affairs of Austria, they had never interfered—never meant to interfere with them—and never were desired to interfere. At the same time they could not but contemplate, in common with the rest of Europe, with deep interest a struggle carried on under circumstances of great difficulty, a contest which had led to the display of so much lofty character on the part of individuals. Had this been the place or the occasion, he should have been as ready as the noble Lord to pay his tribute of respect to individuals who had appeared in that part of the world, and had been most successful in their efforts to restore the glories of the Austrian army in her own dominions. He assured the noble Lord that they had taken no part whatever in the negotiation between the Emperor of Austria and his subjects—a negotiation in which he deemed they had no right to take part. These negotiations, he hoped, would end in consolidating the interests of that Power, and the general peace of Europe, which he, for one, would wish never to see disturbed. It had been said, that the noble Lord at the head of the Foreign Department had been in the habit, unassisted and uncalled for, of offering and forcing his mediation on others. When the papers were produced, it would be seen that no interference had taken place with the affairs of other Powers, but with the consent of those Powers, and in many instances upon their express invitation. It was Austria that made the application to the British Government for mediation in the question between Austria and Sardinia. The British Government did not refuse; they had communicated to Austria the terms on which they proposed to mediate—terms which were favourable to the Austrian interests. At the moment Austria did not think fit to accede to those terms; but a time elapsed, new circumstances occurred, and the relations of parties were somewhat altered, when at length their mediation was accepted, and a congress would be called upon such terms as perfectly justified the course determined on by the noble Lord the Secretary for Foreign Affairs. He did not, certainly, think that his noble Friend opposite (Lord Stanley) would go so far as to say, that, having undertaken a mediation at the request and in consequence of the application of another Power, they should offer only such advice as she herself might wish. Such, at least, were not the terms on which they had, or ever would, consent to interfere in any country; and when the noble Lord chose so to misrepresent the policy of his noble Friend at the head of the Foreign Department, he might remind that noble Lord of the time when he was in conjunction with the noble Lord at the head of the Foreign Department, and that it had fallen to the lot of no man, within the same time, to have to mediate so frequently among different parties, and to have brought that mediation to a successful termination, with the approval of all mankind, with that of the noble Lord, then given, though now withheld, and of all who valued the peace of the world, and desired to see it secured, not by giving to one party that advice which it wished to receive, but by giving both parties the best and wisest advice that could be given. He could enumerate no fewer than eight or nine successful mediations brought to an end by this "Minister of War," and without which war might have arisen between the most powerful kingdoms. If, however, it were conceded to the noble Lord that the policy of his noble Friend (Viscount Palmerston) had been of a disturbing and unpeaceful character, why, the noble Lord, by his own expressed opinion, had still the consolation that his noble Friend, during the past year, had been most unsuccessful in his endeavours. These endeavours had been made at a crisis the most exciting, and under circumstances the most trying, which for many years had occurred in Europe—at a time when those evil passions alluded to by the noble Lord had been let loose, and hostilities existed between country and country, and even forgotten nationalities had been revived in a spirit of bitterness; but, thanks to the policy on which his noble Friend had proceeded, and thanks to that conjunction and co-operation of France with England, noticed in the Speech from the Throne, those evil passions—those hostilities between country and country—those nationalities—had been for the time successfully prevented from ending in a general war. There was, at that moment, no war; he hoped that there would be no war; he did not prophesy that there would be no war; that was no promise of his: but he would say that it was mainly owing to the policy of his noble Friend that there had not been a general outbreak, and he hoped that that policy would finally terminate for the interest of the Powers immediately concerned, and for the maintenance of the peace of Europe. He would now come to another topic on which the noble Lord had dwelt at some length. He now came to notice the comments of the noble Lord on their mediation in the affairs of Sicily. In the first place, the noble Lord would have their Lordships to believe that, as regarded any of the parties concerned, the interference of the Secretary for Foreign Affairs had been uninvited.

Lord STANLEY explained that his remarks applied to the interference of the squadron.

The Marquess of LANSDOWNE said, he would come to that afterwards; but he would first proceed to explain the occasion of the English Government having interfered at all in the affairs of Naples and Sicily. His noble Friend the Lord Privy Seal had never wished to interfere in those affairs, and he did not interfere until after the importunate solicitation of the King of Naples himself. They had been solicited for their advice in the affairs of Naples, and when once in Naples, they were urged and solicited to pass over into Sicily. If they had not gone to Sicily, or if they had not gone to Naples, what would now have been the language of the noble Lord opposite in animadverting upon the conduct of the Government? "Is that the way," he would have said, "in which you use the King of Naples, an ancient Power in friendly relations with the British Government? You have neglected your obligations in so treating a friendly Power who has solicited, under important circumstances, your advice and mediation." We did go to Naples, with the approbation of the Neapolitan Government, but when there, we were solicited to send also into Sicily. "Would the Secretary of the Legation at all events not go? Or would they not send, if it were only an attaché? Would nobody go?" Somebody did go, therefore. As respected Naples, then, it was a Power with which they had been in a state of alliance, and a Power which had solicited their interference. Indeed, looking at Sicily, not as independent of Naples, not as a country which they wished to be independent of Naples, but as a country having certain rights, and in possession of these rights, as being practically independent, these rights were recognised as the ground of British interference in Sicily. He did not say that they had been invited, at the time, to effect for Sicily the recovery of the possession of these rights; but circumstances had occurred, which made it obligatory on the British Government to give the weight and assistance of their moral influence for the recovery of these rights to the nation. In their interference they had expressly limited themselves by the same principle which had ruled the negotiations of former Governments with the same kingdom. He might quote, from more than one document, a precedent in support of the course adopted by the Government in this case, but he would confine himself to the instructions given by Lord Castlereagh to Sir William A'Court, at that time the British Representative at the Court of Naples, in circumstances precisely similar. In that despatch, Lord Castlereagh said, that, "however reluctant the Government was to interfere in the affairs of Sicily, nevertheless, any attempt to reduce Sicily to such a state as should amount to a change of system which would in the end impair the freedom and happiness of the inhabitants, as compared with what they formerly enjoyed, must be resisted." What did the noble Lord think of that? It would be in the recollection of the noble Duke, the Duke of Wellington, that not more than a year had elapsed after the Congress of Vienna when it was thought necessary to make that representation. But it was very convenient for the noble Lord to despise any mention of moral obligation, as though the Government had had nothing to do with mediating between the parties. As for consequences resulting to the British Government, the Neapolitans would not think England bound to go to war. The Government had warned them that they would not go to war, and could they do more? But at the same time they had not disclaimed a warm interest and a strong feeling on their behalf. The British and French squadrons, then, without any preparations for war, and without any instructions either to make war, or to be prepared for it, lay in the waters over against Messina, and observed the motions of both parties in that city. They were surprised to see, without notice or warning, a series of hostilities commenced; and even after the white flag had been hoisted, a terrible bombardment began, and continued throughout the whole of the day. Soldiers were landed from that expedition who destroyed the suburbs of the town, after the town itself had surrendered; and it was then that the Admirals, witnessing the wanton and barbarous atrocities which were perpetrated, felt it their duty to take all the means in their power to put a stop to such horrors. Those officers saw not merely soldiers killed, forts destroyed, houses demolished, but they saw the lame, the sick, and the infirm, taken from the hospitals, and butchered—women who had taken refuge in churches were in those churches violated and murdered, and people were dragged from cottages on which the white flag was flying, and were killed upon the road near the seashore, or were slain in their attempts to escape; and they were prompted by feelings of humanity to interfere in order to terminate such atrocities. Sir W. Parker and the French Admiral had a right to suppose that, having upon three occasions been on the point of bringing negotiations to a successful issue, they might eventually be able to accomplish that object; and that, at all events, if hostilities could be suspended for a short time some negotiation might be concluded which would spare other towns and villages from the horrors of which Messina had been the scene, and put a stop to such acts of inhumanity and wickedness as had never been witnessed in any civilised country. He (the Marquess of Lansdowne) was ready to hold himself responsible for the course taken by Sir W. Parker; for, had he been placed in similar circumstances, he would have acted in the same way. The noble Lord seemed to think, however, that all the interference had been on one side. But it so happened that a short time before the period to which he had alluded, the patriots or insurgents had been successful; they had captured Palermo, and the Neapolitan garrison of that city was in danger of being butchered. Where did they find refuge and protection? On board British ships of war, in which they were conveyed to Naples, and restored to the King's service. The officers of Her Majesty's fleet had, on this as on all other similar occasions, distinguished themselves by a spirit of humanity; and with respect to Sir W. Parker—who in almost every part of the world had performed diplomatic as well as military services, in a manner which had uniformly given the highest satisfaction to his Sovereign and Her Government—he could only say that he had in this case fully maintained his former reputation. Her Majesty's Ministers, he might say, were at that moment in negotiation for a happy termination of these painful contests; and, although he might not venture to express a definite opinion, he would express his sanguine hope that their negotiations would be brought to a prompt and acceptable issue. In regard to what the noble Lord opposite had said upon the subject of the duchies of Schleswig-Holstein, he could only assure the noble Lord that that negotiation was proceeding, if not speedily, yet satisfactorily, and that the difficulties had in a certain degree disappeared. By the assistance of Prussia, and by the partial intervention of Sweden, Russia, and other Powers, the conflicting and difficult pretensions in which this conflict originated had by degrees to a certain extent been withdrawn or disappeared, and there was every prospect that a satisfactory arrangement would be concluded. The noble Lord had also referred to Spain. There was, undoubtedly, a suspension of diplomatic intercourse between the Spanish and British Courts, that suspension having originated in an unpardonable act of violence on the part of the Spanish Government towards the English Ambassador. Upon false accusations the British Minister had been ordered to leave Madrid. The noble Lord had said that Her Majesty's Government left this insult unnoticed; but in this respect the noble Lord's memory deceived him. The consequence of this proceeding was, that the Spanish Minister was directed to leave the British Court. This was the mildest, but, at the same time, the fittest notice that could be taken of the conduct of the Spanish Government. He hoped, however, to see the time when the Spanish Government would recognise the injustice of the charges which had been brought against Sir Henry Bulwer; and he took upon himself to say that there would be no slowness on the part of Her Majesty's Government to re-open diplomatic relations with Spain on such terms as were consistent with the honour of this country. The noble Lord had also referred to the Irish Poor Law. He (the Marquess of Lansdowne) was decidedly of opinion that that law required some revision, and he hoped that the inquiry which it was proposed to institute on the subject would be brought to as speedy a termination as possible. With regard to the request of Her Majesty's Government for an extension of the powers which had been granted them for maintaining tranquillity in Ireland, he would refrain on this occasion from going into any statement to show the necessity of that measure; but before the House adjourned to-night, he would lay upon the table a despatch from the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland containing a distinct statement of the grounds on which he recommended this step, and which had led the Government to acquiesce in his suggestions. It was the duty of the Government to devise and carry out every safe and practicable measure for ameliorating the condition of Ireland; but those remedial efforts could only be rendered successful by the maintenance of a continued state of tranquillity, which would give confidence and security to those individuals who might be induced to embark their capital, their exertions, and their fortunes in that country. The noble Lord had referred to those passages in the Speech which referred to the revival of commerce, and to the encouraging condition of the manufacturing districts. Did the noble Lord mean to reject the evidence which was afforded in proof of these statements, by the increased number of cotton mills in work, the increased number of hands employed, and the increased demand for our manufactures? With regard to the statement in the Speech, that the public revenue exhibited a progressive improvement, he (the Marquess of Lansdowne) would be enabled, at a future time, to lay before the House details which would satisfy them, and, he believed, the noble Lord also, that there was a solid improvement in the revenue, independently of the corn duties. He believed it would be found that, putting aside the corn duties altogether, there had been an increase of 200,000*l.* in the customs in the course of the last year. He had been informed yesterday that there had been a considerable increase of deposits in the Westminster Provident Institution; he believed the same would be found to be the case with the savings banks; and he sincerely trusted that the commencing prosperity, of which there were such evident signs, would be of a permanent character.

The DUKE of RICHMOND said, the noble Lord who had just sat down had admitted the existence of great agricultural distress. He asked his noble Friend, therefore, if he ought not to have asked Her Majesty to express her deep regret at the unfortunate condition of the agricultural class. For his own part he had known the sufferings of that class to be great on many former occasions, but never so great as at present. There was positively no sale for barley in the market, in consequence of the superior quality of the barley which came from France and other parts of the Continent, and the farmers were prohibited from malting it by a heavy tax. They had rightly maintained a protection of from 5 to 15 per cent on manufactured articles, while the landed interest had no protection at all. And why? Was not flour a manufactured article? The farmer could now get scarcely 45*s.* a quarter for his wheat in any market in the country. Loaded as the English farmers were with tithes and local burdens, and subject to that obnoxious and unjust law the malt tax, it was impossible that they could continue to compete with the foreigner, who was almost entirely free from similar burdens. In the workhouses of the county in which he lived, there were more ablebodied men than had ever been known since the passing of the new poor-law; for when the farmers found they could no longer pay the same number of men, they retained those with large families, and were obliged to discharge the others. He had always been an advocate for the new poor-law, there and elsewhere; but he declared to Heaven, he never thought it possible that by Acts of Parliament, by men voting against their conscience, which he regretted to say many of their Lordships had done on the passing of the corn law—he never dreamt that by such a course they were driving into the workhouse the honest, independent, industrious labourer, who only sought to support himself by doing a good day's work for a good day's wages. This was the result of their Anti-Corn-Law League mania, which now, forsooth, the noble and learned Lord had discovered to be an unconstitutional body. His noble and learned Friend declared that he knew it to be so from the first, and yet most extraordinarily consented to receive a boon at their hands. Now, his noble Friend, and, he suspected Her Majesty's Ministers also, appeared to think that the unadorned eloquence of the free-trade senator, and his colleague, Mr. Bright, by their speeches delivered at Liverpool and Manchester, were doing great mischief. He would not do the Government the injustice to believe that they were such cowards as to consent to a reduction of our naval and military forces from the threats of so despicable a body of men. Why, these men would have had no power if they had not worked on the cowardice of the then Minister, who truckled to popular clamour, and abandoned the opinions which he had always held. Large sums of money had been voted last year for the purpose of improving the defences of the country, and securing its soil from the pollution of foreign footsteps. Were they then prepared much to reduce the best of all their defences, the Navy, and the bayonets of the British infantry? He hoped Her Majesty's Government, when they came to propose the reductions which had been talked of, would state their reasons for making them. Was it always economical to make such large reductions? What happened one or two years ago to the East India Company? They thought to effect a saving by sending some regiments home; but they were very shortly after compelled to supply their place by sending out others, so that the economy in that case consisted in the expense of bringing the first home and sending the second out. What would be the result of reducing the Army and Navy? Some Brighton fishermen some day might probably go a little too near the French coast, and the result would be that they would get laid hold of, and perhaps receive a couple of dozen; and then you would hear from one end of the country to the other that our national honour had been insulted, and war would be the cry. These were things for which they ought to be prepared. He was an advocate of peace. It was said that men accustomed to warfare and bloodshed became hardened. He knew the contrary to be the fact; he knew that no men detested war so much as those who had witnessed scenes of the greatest slaughter. He should like to know of what avail their Coercion Act for Ireland would be if they withdrew their forces. The most effective coercion was the knowledge that there was a large British force ready to come down upon them. They were always afraid of the red coats. They might depend upon it there was no economy in such reductions. The parish rates must be increased by such means, because it would not be the most effective young men, but the least effective who would be discharged. What, then, would become of these? They would be perfectly unfit for agricultural pursuits, and must go to add to the crowds already filling our workhouses. Still he felt that his noble Friends on the other side would not retrace their steps. When men were entirely wrong, and began to find out that they were so, they invariably persisted in obstinately following the same course. He had always contended that the home market was the best market for the manufactures of this country; and he looked forward to the time when the failure of this would cause such a pressure from without as would compel Ministers to do justice to the agricultural and colonial interest. There was now not the slightest argument to justify the present system of local taxation. There might have been some reason for it when protection was extended to agriculture; but now that protection was withdrawn, the system was totally without justification. He still hoped to see protection the law of the land. People said this was impossible; but who would have believed that the Peelites would, in 1841, have voted for a total repeal of the corn laws? For his own part, he would always stand up to oppose free trade and defend protection; and to his latest dying day he should deeply regret that so many of their Lordships should have voted on the question of the corn laws in opposition to their own convictions. It was a great triumph to unconstitutional agitation, and would, he feared, be drawn into a most dangerous precedent.

Earl FITZWILLIAM said, no one could entertain the slightest doubt but that his noble Friend who had just sat down would redeem his pledge. But his noble Friend evidently failed to appreciate the effect of public opinion in producing the change which he so greatly deprecated; for the efforts of the Anti-Corn-Law League would have been powerless unless they had found a response in the feelings of the great mass of the people. His noble Friend might, perhaps, find a willing audience in that House; but the great mass of the people of this country would listen far more willingly to the arguments of those who told them that every article of consumption must be cheapened, and that the last remnant of protection must be got rid of. It was a great mistake to imagine that local taxation fell exclusively on the agricultural interest; for all realised property contributed its share. The low price of agricultural produce, to which his noble Friend had alluded, was the result of the unfavourable season, which had spoiled the harvest in the south, although the northern part of this kingdom had suffered comparatively little, in consequence of the harvest occurring later in the year, when the weather was more favourable. He deprecated that war of class interests which speeches such as that of his noble Friend opposite tended to encourage. In that warfare he had never joined; and he warned his noble Friend, and those who acted with him, to beware lest by their conduct they put those in the right who raised an outcry against the landed interest. That interest in 1841 might, if they had chosen to do so, have made a much better bargain for themselves; and if they were now without protection they had only themselves to blame. He wished to say a few words on a subject of the greatest practical importance—he meant the condition of Ireland. They had been told by a noble Friend of his, that it was his intention to move for a Committee on the subject of the Irish Poor Law. Now, he believed that if that Committee were to adhere to the scheme which his noble Friend was disposed to lay down for its guidance, there would be no difficulty in conducting its inquiries. But he, nevertheless, rather agreed with his noble Friend opposite, that it would be better that the Government should at once introduce the measure which they meant to propose as an amendment of the existing law, rather than leave the matter to the inquiries of a Committee. At all events, he felt convinced that it would be advisable to do at once whatever was to be done on the subject. It was of great importance, in his opinion, that amendments in the law should be effected, and especially that the area of taxation should be diminished. It must be recollected that, in the view of Parliament, the Irish Poor Law had a double object—one was to maintain the people; the other (a less legitimate one, but one much insisted on by the English portion of the Legislature) was to stimulate the Irish landowners to give employment to the population. This latter object would never be attained unless the area of taxation were diminished so as to give the employer of labour the full benefit of his outlay by the reduction of his rates. He believed that without such a change, the measure would entirely fail in stimulating the landlords of Ireland to employ the labourers of that country.

The EARL of YARBOROUGH said, he wished to express the grounds on which he felt it his duty to vote against the Amendment. He had been opposed to the repeal of the corn laws; but he could not vote for that Amendment unless he was prepared to endeavour to reverse that policy; and he confessed that he was not ready again to expose the agricultural interest to all the uncertainty, and all the agitation from which they had so much suffered of late years. He felt that although the adoption of the free-trade policy was a dangerous experiment, it was desirable that that policy should have a fair trial. He was not sorry to find that the Speech from the Throne contained no allusion to the agricultural interest, and he had hoped that no allusion would have been made to that interest in the debate. He felt certain that Her Majesty's Government had not meant to treat that interest with contempt. In conclusion, he had only to state that he was prepared to wait with patience the result of the experiment of free trade that had been made; and he was not then prepared to say that because that experiment had an unfortunate beginning, the agriculturists of England were to acknowledge that they could not compete with foreign countries.

The DUKE of ARGYLL said, he considered it would be nothing short of a great public calamity that the Amendment of the noble Lord (Lord Stanley) should be adopted. He would not then discuss the merits or demerits of those who had supported or opposed the abolition of the corn laws. He honoured the consistency and the chivalrous spirit which the noble Lord opposite (Lord Stanley) had employed in the course he had pursued upon that question; and he could not doubt but the noble Lord gave similar credit to those who had thought it their duty, contrary to their previous convictions, to pursue an opposite course. But the question of protection had then been disposed of; and he felt that it was not right that they should reverse the decision to which they had then come, until it had been proved that the change had been a failure. Now, he could not admit that such proof had been given. He already perceived in this country symptoms of commercial improvement. At all events, he felt that that was not a time to come to the foot of the Throne with querulous complaints of the state of certain portions of the country. He said emphatically "of certain portions" of the country; for he had been in communication with some of the ablest and most enterprising farmers in Scotland, and he could state that they regarded the present crisis with no alarm. He believed they were prepared to take their chance under the altered commercial policy of the country. They believed the present prices of corn were due, in a great measure, to the operation of a period of transition. Under these circumstances, he should decidedly give his vote against the Amendment.

The DUKE of WELLINGTON said, that notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, he was anxious to avail himself of that opportunity of explaining to their Lordships, in a few words, his view of the question then under their consideration. He deprecated their adoption of the Amendment, and he should proceed to give his reasons for voting against it. He greatly admired the speech of his noble and learned Friend (Lord Brougham), who was the person in that House most capable of appreciating that state of affairs on the Continent, which rendered it exceedingly difficult for this country to give efficient aid in maintaining the peace of Europe. He certainly was not able to estimate those difficulties with the same local knowledge which his noble and learned Friend possessed; but he had always been sensible of the extreme delicacy and difficulty attending the situation of public affairs on the Continent of Europe, during the whole of the year 1848; and he had always been most anxious that nothing should be done to throw the smallest difficulty or impediment in the way of the Government in carrying on our foreign relations, or that any step should be taken which could give occasion for the smallest grounds for the belief that the Government was not supported by the public opinion of this country. For that reason he confessed that he had been relieved from the utmost anxiety, when he had heard Her Majesty read from the Throne that paragraph in Her Speech in which She stated that She would, as soon as the interests of the public service might permit, direct that the papers relating to our recent policy on the Continent should be laid before Parliament. He had been gratified to hear that declaration from Her Majesty, and he had hoped it would have had the effect of preventing a discussion on those delicate and difficult affairs until the House should have been fully informed of what had occurred, and of the measures really adopted by Her Majesty's Government. Unfortunately, however, the House had already entered into a discussion of those questions, notwithstanding that Her Majesty had given grounds for the postponement of that discussion, until the papers relating to the subject should have been laid before the House, when their Lordships might have considered the matter with a full knowledge of the facts. He was certainly aware that there was a good deal to be explained with regard to these affairs before they could be properly discussed. The noble Lord who had spoken on that (the Ministerial) side of the House, had expressed a strong opinion respecting Naples and Sicily; and he (the Duke of Wellington) was anxious to move in that House for the production of certain documents which he had not found among the Parliamentary papers connected with that question. He alluded to the declarations made by the King of Naples when he acceded to the Treaty of Vienna. He was at that time King of the Two Sicilies. It was true that he was not at first *de facto* King of Naples, because Bonaparte had military possession of Naples, and had made his brother King of Naples. But he was recognised by this country as King of the Two Sicilies, and it was in that quality he made his treaty with his late Majesty George III. After his Majesty had obtained possession of his Throne of the Two Sicilies, he had accepted the Treaty of Vienna. Now his Majesty and this country were as much bound by that acceptance as by any other portion of the Treaty of Vienna. He (the Duke of Wellington) intended to move for the production of the document signed by his Majesty, which was at present out of print, and which was a document of considerable importance. He did not think it was desirable that the House should discuss such questions of foreign policy as those which had been introduced that evening, until their Lordships should have had all the necessary documents before them. It was true that his noble Friend's Amendment did not turn exactly on the foreign policy of the Government; but his noble Friend, and his noble and learned Friend, had addressed the House at great length upon that subject; and the noble Marquess had also entered into that question. He entreated their Lordships, however, not to let it go forth to the people of this country, and to the people of foreign countries, that an amendment and a division had taken place in the House of Lords on the subject of our foreign relations. Let the Government continue their negotiations until they should see from the papers to be laid before them that they ought to withdraw their confidence from the Ministers of the Crown. Under these circumstances he could not vote for the Amendment of his noble Friend, and he entreated their Lordships not to give it their support.

LORD STANLEY, in explanation, begged to say distinctly that he wished it to be understood that he did not consider the two subjects alluded to by the noble Duke as at all connected. He called upon them to give no opinion as to our foreign or colonial policy. All he asked by their vote was for the House to declare whether they thought that, in the description of the domestic circumstances of this country, the Speech from the Throne did or did not give a faithful and real account of its condition. By his Motion he gave them an opportunity of saying, whether or not they thought it right that no reference should be made to the agricultural and commercial interests of the country; and it was on that ground that he would, with all respect to the noble Duke opposite, press his Motion to a division.

Question was then put, "Whether the said Words shall be there inserted?" House divided:—Content 50; Not-Content 52: Majority 2.

List of the NOT-CONTENTS.

DUKES.

Argyll
Norfolk
St. Albans
Wellington

MARQUESSES.

Anglesea
Breadalbane
Clanricarde
Conyngham
Headfort
Lansdowne

EARLS.

Besborough
Bruce
Carlisle
Chichester
Ducie
Essex
Fortescue
Fitzwilliam
Granville
Grey
Minto
Strafford
St. Germans
Yarborough
Waldegrave

BARONS.

Ashburton
Bateman

Beaumont
Byron
Camoys
Colborne
Crewe
Cottenham
Campbell
Denman
Eddisbury
Elphinstone
Erskine
Foley
Godolphin
Hastings
Littleton
Lilford
Lovat
Milford
Monteagle
Poltimore
Saye and Sele
Suffield
Sudely
Teynham
Vaux
Vivian

Paired off.

FOR.	AGAINST.
Archb. of Canterbury	Lord Middleton
Duke of Roxburgh	Lord Exmouth
Bishop of Hereford	Lord Lyndhurst
Marquess of Donegal	Lord Munster
Lord Langdale	Earl Tankerville
Lord Holland	Lord Digby
Earl Fitzhardinge	Lord Ward
Earl Lovelace	Lord Boston

Resolved in the *negative*.

Then the original Motion was *agreed to;* and a Committee appointed to prepare the Address, which, being afterwards reported and agreed to, was ordered to be presented to Her Majesty by the Lords with White Staves.

House adjourned to Monday next.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, February 1, 1849.

Minutes.] New Writ (*during Recess*).—For York County (West Riding), *v.* Viscount Morpeth, now Earl of Carlisle; For King's Lynn, *v.* Lord George Bentinck, deceased; For Liskeard, *v.* Charles Buller, Esq., deceased; For Truro, *v.* Edmund Turner, Esq., deceased. *Now Ordered.*—For Portsmouth, *v.* The Right Hon. Sir Francis Thornhill Baring, Bart., First Commissioner of the Admiralty; For Kingston-upon-Hull, *v.* Matthew Talbot Baines, Esq., Commissioner for Relief of the Poor in England; For Devon (Southern Division), *v.* Lord Courtenay, Chiltern Hundreds; For Leominster, *v.* Henry Barkly, Esq., Governor of British Guiana; For Bolton, *v.* John Bowring, Esq., Chiltern Hundreds.

New Members Sworn. For Derby, Michael Thomas Bass, Esq.; For Liskeard, Richard Budden Crowder, Esq.; For Bolton, Stephen Blair, Esq.

Public Bills.—1° Outlawries.

The House met at Two o'clock.

Message to attend Her Majesty; House went; and being returned,

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had issued Warrants for New Writs for several places (*See Minutes*).

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO THE SPEECH.

Mr. SPEAKER reported Her Majesty's Speech, and read it to the House (*See* Lords).

Lord HARRY VANE said, that in moving an Address in answer to the gracious Speech, of which the right hon. Gentleman in the chair had just read a copy, delivered that morning by our Sovereign Lady the Queen, he felt he was unable to avail himself of the plea often set forth by Gentlemen entrusted with the honourable task he had now to fulfil, of having but recently become a Member of the House, in order to solicit its indulgence. But though he was unable to advance that personal claim, he trusted some indulgence would be extended to him, in consideration of the remarkable incidents upon which he intended to touch, that had marked the annals of the year just gone by—of the impending uncertainties that still hung over the face of the world—and the important nature of those questions of domestic policy that were about to be submitted to the wisdom of the Legislature. The paragraphs of Her Majesty's Speech to which, in the first instance, he requested the attention of the House, were those having reference to the foreign relations of the country. It must be a subject for sincere congratulation to all parties, considering the marvellous events which had crowded themselves with such rapid succession within the year which had just gone by, that the forbearance, the prudence, and the deep sense of responsibility—perhaps he might say the mutual apprehensions—of those who had the administration of the public affairs of Europe, with the few exceptions to which he should presently refer, had prompted them to avert the great calamity of an European conflagration — in addition to the disasters which intestine discord and civil convulsion had unhappily inflicted. There were two exceptions to which he was about to allude. Happily, in each of those cases armistices had been concluded. He was not about to enter into an historical dissertation upon the causes of those events. He alluded, first, to the war of Germany against Denmark upon the Schleswig-Holstein question; and next to the invasion of Lombardy by Sardinia. He was not about either to censure or to defend the acts of those Powers, or even to characterise them in any way. His only motive in alluding to them was their connexion with the political relations of this country, and with the policy pursued by Her Majesty's Government upon the general affairs of Europe. In each of these cases, it had been the object and aim of the Government to act upon a policy of peace—to endeavour to stay the contagion of war, and confine it within the narrowest area, as well as allay political heats and dissensions. In the case of Schleswig-Holstein, more especially, it had been their endeavour to reconcile, so far as they could be reconciled, conflicting opinions and pretensions. In each case, happily, Her Majesty's Government had been enabled, after a not long-continued state of warfare, to induce the parties to concur in a suspension of arms, and negotiate upon a basis, with a view to arrange a durable settlement, which might prevent at least an early disturbance of the peace of Europe. In the remaining case, there had been a suspension of arms of a different character. He alluded to the affairs of Sicily. A suspension of arms had been concluded between Naples and Sicily, and, as he had intimated, of a somewhat different character to the others he had referred to. In this instance, the British and French admirals, acting upon the influence of humane motives, and animated mainly by the sight of atrocities and barbarities, of which they had been spectators, interposed their offices for the conclusion of an armistice. An armistice was agreed to, and negotiations were still pending, in which conditions had been proposed, which he trusted would have the effect of conciliating the interests of the two kingdoms of Naples and Sicily. In other respects, Great Britain had happily remained a passive spectatress of the events passing around; and our position had enabled us, in the last extraordinary year, when men educated in widely different political schools, and, consequently, entertaining very different views, had been alternately raised to the highest offices of State, and driven from them, to afford hospitality and a peaceful asylum on our shores. It was also most satisfactory to be able to say, at least he expressed his own convictions upon it, that there never had been a period when there was he would not say less hostility felt towards this country by other nations, but greater good-will entertained towards England by the nations of Europe than at the present moment; that there never had been a period when there were fewer chances of quarrel, and less likelihood of embroilment with other Powers, than at this moment. It was also a matter for triumph and pride, that, in the midst of the fevers and contentions that had raged around us, the institutions of this country had stood the test of trial, whilst in every other country, from the confines of Russia to the Pyrenees, through the Italian peninsula, to the Straits of Messina, there was not a single country whose institutions had not undergone change. In many, their constitutions had been entirely altered. The capitals of some of them had been stained by civil contests. It was therefore a matter of triumph to us, that, during such a period of change, when revolution was almost everywhere abroad, the peace of this country could hardly be said to have been disturbed. The Chartist disturbances had only the effect of eliciting a spirit of loyalty, an expression of public feeling towards the Sovereign of the realm, an intelligent, but not a servile attachment to the constitution of the country; and if these disturbances spread alarm, the alarm arose rather from the strangeness of events abroad, than from any well-defined cause of serious danger. However he might be of opinion that some earlier anticipation of the necessities of the period, some earlier concessions to the popular demands, might have tended to avert a portion of those calamities which had occurred in other countries; still he could perceive indications that when the memory of past disasters should have faded away there would remain the advantages of popular government, popular institutions, and popular control. We ourselves had derived tangible and substantial benefit from the quiet we had enjoyed. We had derived the advantages of the restoration of commerce and the improvement of our finances. He need only call to mind the disasters that occurred previously to the meeting of Parliament last year, the financial gloom which then existed, and the large deficit in the revenue. We were emerging, slowly but certainly, from a crisis which found a parallel alone in the year 1825, if it were a parallel, in the failure of the banks at that period; certainly we had striking indications of the extent of the evil that befel the mercantile community in the returns of the income-tax, which proved that a great destruction of capital must have taken place. Yet, at a period when the country was slowly recovering from that disaster, there supervened a revolution in France, followed by successive revolutions in Germany and Italy, and a war between Germany and Scandinavia, which materially affected the trade of the north of England with the northern parts of Germany. That we should have continued in full receipt of revenue during the whole summer of 1848, under these circumstances, was, in his opinion, a most gratifying feature. In some parts of England, more especially in the southern counties, in 1848 we had the misfortune to have a very indifferent harvest. Trade, however, recovered, though slowly, notwithstanding. He was not unaware that great depression existed among the agriculturists. They had, he was aware, suffered much; but that suffering seemed to him to be incidental to the great change made in the corn laws; for it must have been expected that large importations of corn would take place upon the abolition of those laws. Independently of that, circumstances had been peculiarly adverse. In France the harvest had been veryabundant, and prices necessarily low. This, to a certain degree, would account for distress among the agricultural interest; but with the revival of trade, of which there were indications, he could not but think that agricultural prosperity would revive also. Her Majesty, in Her most gracious Speech, recommended a revision of the navigation laws. The House would bear in mind that, from the great pressure of business last Session, it was impossible to find time to conclude their deliberations upon this question. He thought, however, that the paragraphs with regard to this subject, contained in Her Majesty's Speech, were such as could not provoke hostility. The question would be discussed hereafter; and it would be for Parliament to decide what modification should be adopted. After the divisions which took place last year, he could not doubt that the House would think it expedient to make an extensive alteration in those laws. He now approached a subject which presented a deplorable complication of evils. If he had occasion before to say that peace and order could hardly be said to have been seriously disturbed in this country, he feared he could not say the same with regard to Ireland. The lawless state of agitation which characterised that country, afforded too ready materials for the designs and schemes of men of weak intellect and morbid ambition. Happily the success of their efforts had not corresponded to their malicious intents. Still it could not be denied — the fact was incontrovertible— that disaffection to a considerable degree existed among the mass of the people. A very large force stationed in Ireland had fortunately restrained the disaffected, and, together with that meritorious body of men, the police of Ireland, who had refused to be debauched from their duty, put down insurrection with but a slight effusion of blood. But that the same spirit of disaffection still prevailed, there was too much reason to fear. The suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland, which took place at the close of the last Session, exercised, he believed, a most beneficial influence in Ireland in the suppression of rebellion, the saving of the effusion of blood, and the restraining of insurrection. It was a question of confidence in the Lord Lieutenant; but every one knew that the temper with which he administered the great powers invested in him, and the wisdom with which he applied those powers, was above all praise. No one had a higher value for the Habeas Corpus Act than he possessed. This was the only country throughout Europe wherein such a law was in operation. He therefore attached the highest importance to it. But during a period of insurrection the Government was necessarily compelled to resort to extraordinary measures for the suppression of disaffection, and no better means of effecting this purpose presented themselves than was afforded by the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. A firm, vigorous, and efficacious administration of the law was of the first necessity. For above all things, it was most necessary that the law should be supreme, as without it every other effort would be inoperative. There had been great complaint in different quarters, of the mode in which the poor-law was administered in Ireland. He believed it was the intention of Government that there should be an inquiry into the poor-law. That that law operated differently in different parts was obvious; but he trusted that such arrangements would be entered into as would protect the active and patriotic landlords, and prevent them from being swamped by the surrounding mendicancy. Care, however, must be taken to provide for the support of those persons who, in certain pauperised districts, could not be supported by the property within them. There was one more subject to which he would allude, which had prominently occupied public attention. He alluded to the question of economy. This question had certainly struck deep into the public mind. In former years there had been a great necessity for augmenting the estimates of the public burdens; there had been a growing uneasiness at these increasing augmentations; but, happily, this year a considerable reduction was announced; and he believed nothing would conciliate the public more than a reduction of the national expenditure—a reduction consistent with the requirements of the public service, and the maintenance of that protective force on which the security of the country depended. He had now endeavoured briefly to deal with the questions referred to in the Address. In doing so, he trusted he had avoided any irritating topics, as he was desirous to preserve the unanimity which ever characterised debates of this nature. The Address, he was sure, had been framed in such a manner that its adoption would not compromise any hon. Gentleman who might take an adverse view as to the course which had been adopted by the Government; besides, hon. Gentlemen who differed with its sentiments, would have ample opportunities of enunciating their opinions, without, on the present occasion disturbing the unanimity which had so long prevailed in the discussion of Motions of this nature, and to which good rule, he trusted, no exception would be made on the present occasion. He would detain the House no longer than to express a hope that the last paragraph in Her Majesty's Speech would meet with unanimous approbation from all parts of the House, namely, that the destinies of this country must depend upon Almighty God. That they must depend upon his superintending mercy was evident; and he trusted that that protection which had so long been vouchsafed to their institutions would continue to be extended to them. The noble Lord concluded by reading the following Address:—

"Most Gracious Sovereign,

"We Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal Subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to express to Your Majesty our humble Thanks for Your Majesty's gracious Speech from the Throne.

"We beg humbly to assure Your Majesty that we participate in the satisfaction which Your Majesty has been pleased to express, that both in the North and in the South of Europe the contending parties have consented to a suspension of Arms for the purpose of negotiating terms of Peace.

"We thank Your Majesty for informing us, that the hostilities carried on in the Island of Sicily were attended with circumstances so revolting that the British and French Admirals were impelled, by motives of humanity, to interpose and to stop the effusion of blood; and we rejoice to learn that Your Majesty has availed Yourself of the interval thus obtained to propose, in conjunction with France, to the King of Naples, an arrangement calculated to produce a permanent settlement of affairs in Sicily.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for the assurance of Your anxious endeavours, in offering Your good offices to the various contending Powers, to prevent the extension of the calamities of War, and to lay the foundation for lasting and honourable Peace; and we beg to acquaint Your Majesty that we derive much gratification from the expression of Your constant desire to maintain with all Foreign States the most friendly relations.

"We thank Your Majesty for informing us, that the Papers connected with these transactions will be laid before Parliament, by direction of Your Majesty, as soon as the interests of the public service will permit.

"We regret to learn that a Rebellion of a formidable character has broken out in the Punjaub, and that the Governor General of India has been compelled, for the preservation of the peace of the country, to assemble a considerable force, which is now engaged in military operations, and we cordially rejoice at the information which Your Majesty has imparted to us, that these unprovoked disturbances have not affected the peace of British India.

"We humbly assure Your Majesty, that the restrictions imposed upon Commerce by the Navigation Laws will engage our most earnest attention; and that it will be our duty to consider whether it be right to repeal or to modify their provisions if we shall find that these Laws are in whole or in part unnecessary for the maintenance of our Maritime Power, while they fetter Trade and Industry.

"We beg to express our Thanks to Your Majesty for having directed the Estimates for the Service of the year to be laid before this House, and for acquainting us that they will be framed with the most anxious attention to a wise economy.

"We rejoice to learn that Your Majesty has been enabled, on account of the present state of affairs, to make large reductions upon the Estimates of last year.

"We beg leave humbly to express the satisfaction which we participate with Your Majesty, that this portion of the United Kingdom has remained tranquil amidst the convulsions which have disturbed so many parts of Europe.

"Whilst rejoicing that the Insurrection in Ireland has not been renewed, we unite with Your Majesty in deploring the existence of a spirit of disaffection; and our serious consideration will be devoted to the intimation of Your Majesty, that Your Majesty is compelled, with regret, to ask for a continuance, for a limited time, of those powers which, in the last Session, were deemed by Parliament to be necessary for the preservation of the public tranquillity.

"We most sincerely share with Your Majesty the satisfaction which Your Majesty feels at the revival of commerce from those shocks which, at the commencement of last Session, were to be deplored; and we learn with gratification that the condition of the manufacturing districts is likewise more encouraging than it has been for a considerable period, and that the state of the Revenue is one of progressive improvement.

"We fully participate with Your Majesty, in the great concern which Your Majesty has been pleased to express on account of the very severe distress in some parts of Ireland, which has been caused by another failure of the Potato Crop.

"We can assure Your Majesty, that our best attention will be devoted to the subject of the operation of the Laws for the Relief of the Poor in Ireland, and we beg to convey to Your Majesty the expression of our thanks for Your gracious intimation, that any measure by which those Laws may be beneficially amended, and the condition of the people may be improved, will receive Your Majesty's cordial assent.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for the gracious manner with which Your Majesty has been pleased to advert to the loyal spirit of Your people, and to that attachment to the institutions of their country, which has animated them during a period of commercial difficulty, deficient production of food, and political revolution.

"We join with Your Majesty, in humbly looking to the protection of Almighty God, for favour in our continued progress; and we beg to convey to Your Majesty the assurance that we will faithfully assist Your Majesty in upholding the fabric of the Constitution, founded, as it is, upon the principles of freedom and of justice."

MR. E. H. BUNBURY said, that in rising to second the Motion of the noble Lord, he must assure the House, that if he began with entreating their indulgence to so inexperienced a speaker as himself, this was no mere matter of form, or idle compliance with established custom. It was impossible for him to find himself placed in a situation which led him almost necessarily to look back upon the events of the year just past, and to look around him on the events which were still passing on the continent of Europe, without feeling that the circumstances of the times were such as to lend no ordinary degree of significance to matters which on other occasions would be scarcely worthy of a passing mention. The very fact that they were now again assembled in the ordinary course of things to resume their ordinary deliberations, free alike from the control of an imposing military force, and from the intimidation of popular tumult, was in itself no trifling subject of congratulation. Again, Her Majesty had been pleased to advert, in terms that could not but be most grateful to all her loyal subjects, to the peace and tranquillity which had reigned in this country, notwithstanding all the agitation that prevailed elsewhere. On ordinary occasions, such an allusion would have been deemed unnecessary, because the tranquillity of the country would have been taken for granted. But what varied emotions of pride and gratitude was it not calculated to call forth upon the present occasion! He trusted that it was in no spirit of vain presumption that he ventured to assert, that for this great blessing of internal peace and tranquillity, their gratitude was due, not only to that Supreme Dispenser of all blessings, to whom their thanks should ever first be tendered—not only to that Government which had displayed, under trying circumstances, an energy and firmness without which no Government would ever long command the confidence of the British people, but still more to that people itself, whose best qualities had never been more prominently displayed than during the trying events of the past year. That people had proclaimed, in a manner not to be mistaken, to all the world, what were the real fruits of a long period of free institutions, and long habits of self-government. He felt that he might be thought to be wandering from the subjects immediately before them if he thus referred to what took place nearly a year back, to that great manifestation of the will of the English people, when they crushed into insignificance a threatened exhibition of physical force by a display of power tenfold greater, and an array of numbers ten times more numerous. But he felt that it was to the noble attitude assumed on that occasion by the English people, that they were indebted for the perfect tranquillity which had prevailed since they were last assembled—a tranquillity so profound, that all the storms which had rolled over the continent of Europe had failed to awaken even the faintest echo from the British shores. He looked forward with confidence to the continuance of that tranquillity. It was not only on the existence of internal peace and tranquillity that they had to congratulate themselves; he rejoiced also in the preservation of peace abroad, and the maintenance of those friendly relations with foreign Powers which it ought to be the great object of our rulers to preserve unbroken. He could not but refer to a period of the past year when the revolution which had occurred in France, and had shaken the social fabric in that country to its very foundations, was followed with unexampled rapidity by similar revolutions in almost every other Continental State. At that time, the most sanguine would scarcely have ventured to hope that when they should again assemble, they would be able to rejoice in an assurance such as that which they had just heard. Without entering on the numerous questions connected with our foreign policy, on which the noble Lord who preceded him had touched so ably, he would only add his humble testimony to that of the noble Lord, so far as a recent visit to France enabled him to judge, that in that country which, as it was our nearest neighbour, might be our most valuable friend or our only formidable foe—there existed at this time a greater security for the maintenance of peace than at any former period. He derived this assurance, not from the sentiments of this or that Minister—not from the disposition of any party who found itself at the head of affairs in that country to-day, and who might be driven from it to-morrow—but from the disposition of that numerous class of the French people whose sentiments had now for the first time been called into operation. He believed that the great number of small landed proprietors, who would naturally and necessarily be the first to feel the effects of war, in the form of increased conscription and increased taxation, were altogether opposed to any renewal of hostilities, and that it would be difficult to involve France in any hasty or inconsiderate war, in opposition to the wishes of a class which formed such a great majority of its population. But not only had the House to rejoice in the maintenance of tranquillity at home and peace abroad; they had also to congratulate themselves on the fact that trade was reviving and manufactures on the increase. This result was doubly grateful when he referred back to the present period of last year, which offered an unexampled crisis, such, indeed, as few nations could have survived, and which was followed just as they were beginning to revive from its effects, by convulsions on the Continent, which threatened for a time to destroy all credit, and annihilate all commerce. They had felt the effect of those convulsions, but now they were fast recovering, and this fact alone would show the firm foundation on which British commerce rested, and the strength and elasticity of our resources. He would take that opportunity of mentioning a few of the leading facts. In January and February, 1848, there was a fast growing increase in the export trade. The three succeeding months felt the effects of the events on the Continent. After the expiration of those three months the receding condition of the exports was stopped. In October last, the exports again exceeded those of October, 1847, and in December, the increase was not only continued, but was extended. In the month ending the 5th of November, the first in which there was any return to an increase (if he might be allowed such an expression), the increase was a little more than 30,000*l.* In the month ending the 5th of December, it had risen to 132,000*l.*, whilst in that ending the 5th of January, it had reached 589,000*l.* This great increase of the exports of British manufactures had been accompanied by a decided revival in the manufacturing districts. It was gratifying also to reflect that concurrently with this increase in the exports, the amount of imports cleared for home consumption, and of such imports especially as entered most generally into the consumption of the poor man, which constituted his comforts, or even his luxuries—that in such imports as coffee, tea, sugar, and tobacco, there had been either a considerable increase, or at all events they had maintained their former position, notwithstanding the numerous causes which might have combined to depress them. That such a flourishing state of our foreign trade and internal consumption should be accompanied by an improvement in the revenue, was to be expected; and they had already heard from the noble Lord that such was in effect the case. He believed, indeed, that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he brought forward his financial statement at the commencement of last year, could little have looked forward to such an increase in the revenue as had marked the last quarter. This state of the finances would have been most satisfactory even if there had been no prospect that that increase of revenue would be accompanied by a reduction of expenditure; but he was sure he expressed the sentiment of every hon. Gentleman in that House, when he stated that there was no passage in Her Majesty's most gracious Speech which he had heard with greater satisfaction, than that in which Her Majesty announced her intention of making a great reduction in the expenditure of the country, and that the estimates of the current year would fall far short of the preceding one. He believed there had been for some time past a great and increasing feeling that the burdens of the country were excessive, that the taxation was too heavy, that some measures must be adopted to put a stop to the expenditure, and that the estimates of succeeding years should be reduced. He did not believe that the taxation had been really excessive, if compared with the resources of the British people. He believed, indeed, that it would be very difficult to put a limit to those resources; that it would be very difficult to say what amount of taxation the British people would not be able to bear—nay, what amount they would not willingly and cheerfully bear, if they believed it to be absolutely necessary to maintain the prosperity or uphold the credit of the country. But he believed that the feeling as to the amount of the expenditure being excessive, had arisen not so much from the actual amount, as because it was believed to be greater than was necessary. He thought it would be most unjust to reflect either upon the present Government or that which preceded it upon this account, or to charge them with any disposition unnecessarily to aggravate the burdens of the nation, or with any wanton or lavish expenditure of the public money; but he believed that it was in the nature of all Governments that every Minister in his own department should attend more especially to the efficiency of that department, and that Governments were apt to overlook an increasing expenditure because they believed it to be necessary to the efficiency of the public service. It fell within the province of that House to check a Minister in such a course, and recall to his recollection the necessity of moderating expenditure. He considered that that House was never more properly discharging its constitutional functions than when so employed; and he believed that there was no one more willing to admit than were Her Majesty's Ministers themselves that the discussions which took place in the course of last Session, and the Committee which was then appointed upon the Navy Estimates—which he believed would be followed by similar investigation into other branches this Session—had been attended with very great advantage to the country. Upon this subject he would only, in addition, advert to a circular which had lately been issued by Her Majesty's Naval Department, and which, no doubt, every hon. Gentleman had seen, in order to show what had been the effect of those discussions, and how much might be accomplished when the subject was seriously met and considered. He had no means of knowing what would be the precise amount or nature of the retrenchments which the estimates, when presented to the House, would exhibit; but he trusted those estimates would be such as to show to the people that the Government were really disposed to carry out to the utmost that retrenchment which they had professed themselves ready to adopt, in so far as might be compatible with the real exigencies of the public service; and he believed that the people of England would be perfectly willing to admit the sufficiency of those retrenchments, if it were proved to their satisfaction that they could not be carried further without endangering the public credit or the national honour. One subject had been alluded to in Her Majesty's gracious Speech in so pointed a manner that he could not refrain from briefly touching upon it—he alluded to the Navigation Laws. Whatever diversity of opinion might be entertained upon the subject of the policy and operation of those laws — whatever divergence of opinion might be seen when they should come to the consideration of those laws, he trusted he was not mistaken in believing that the House would unanimously concur in expressing their willingness to take them again into their consideration, and to subject them to a searching examination. Without at all forestalling the discussion upon this subject, for which there would be many more fitting opportunities, he would mention one circumstance which weighed strongly with himself as an argument for reconsidering them. It was this: he thought that every one would admit, who had examined the legislation upon this subject, that that legislation during some past years had consisted almost entirely of a series of concessions of particular points affecting those laws; at the same time that they had upheld the system as a whole, they had agreed to concessions, which, if they were not opposed to the letter, were certainly contrary to the spirit, of the navigation laws; and he believed that whenever the legislation of a country presented this aspect, it afforded, if not a strong presumption, at least a strong probability that there might be something radically and fundamentally wrong in the principle itself. He thought, at all events, that it afforded just grounds upon which a reasonable Legislature might resume the consideration of the subject in all its bearings, in order that it might be seen whether those concessions had been extorted in each case by the force of particular circumstances, or whether they had resulted from something inherently wrong in the broad basis of the system. He turned now to that subject upon which the noble Lord had already touched, and it was a subject so painful that it was with unwillingness he now alluded to it. But it was impossible to conceal the fact, that the condition of that sister country, which was so indissolubly linked with us that her prosperity must ever be a matter of rejoicing to this country, and that her adversity could never be looked upon with indifference, was very much to be regretted. He might look indeed with triumph at the success of our efforts in suppressing anarchy, and putting down open rebellion; but it was with pain and regret he had heard the announcement that the disaffection in that country still continued to be such as to call for a renewal of those extraordinary powers for which Her Majesty's Government were obliged to apply to Parliament in the course of the last Session. That those extraordinary powers would again be granted if it should be found that a necessity for them still existed, he could not doubt; and he believed that he placed no overweening confidence in the disposition of the present Parliament, or in the disposition of any Parliament that ever sat within these walls, when he stated that no effort would be wanting on their parts to uphold the Executive Government in the preservation of order and peace. At the same time he could not disguise from himself that there was the very onerous duty incumbent upon Her Majesty's Ministers of proving that that necessity did exist, and that reasons as cogent for the renewal of the power would be required as those which had induced them upon a former occasion, with an unanimity rarely seen, to arm the Government with extraordinary and unusual powers. There was one other subject, and only one, upon which he should presume further to trouble the House, and that one was fraught with so many difficulties that he scarcely knew how to allude to it—he meant the subject of the Irish Poor Law. It was impossible to disguise from themselves that in undertaking to introduce a poor-law into that country they were trying a very difficult experiment. The introduction of a poor-law into any country was always a delicate and difficult task; but under the circumstances which unhappily existed in Ireland when the poor-law was introduced, considering that that country was then recovering, and only just recovering, from the effects of a calamity almost unprecedented in the history of nations, it was impossible not to feel that the difficulties which beset the introduction of a law of that nature were so great and so various, that they could scarcely wonder that its working had not been so satisfactory as might have been desired. Such a result might perhaps be ascribed to errors or defects in the law itself; but he would not advert to them further than to express an earnest hope that in approaching that difficult problem, they should avoid encumbering it with any increased difficulties, by mixing up with it party questions, or political animosities. He trusted that they should all approach it with an humble hope and earnest desire satisfactorily to grapple with all its difficulties, and that they would avoid above all things increasing those difficulties by embarrassing the subject with matters which did not belong to it. He trusted that those Irish Members who had now returned to that House with naturally strong sentiments upon this subject, would believe that English Members were actuated like themselves by the strongest desire to do justice to that unhappy country. He trusted that they would believe him when he asserted, what he knew to be a fact, that there were many Members of that House, personally unconnected with Ireland, as was he himself, who yet entertained, in common with himself, no other sentiments towards that unhappy country but those of deep regret for her past wrongs, and deep sympathy with her present condition; and he knew that many were prepared to join heart and hand with any party, no matter on which side of the House they sat, who could show them any practical means of repairing those wrongs and alleviating those sufferings. But he must entreat them to bear in mind that it was not possible for any body of men in one Session, or even in a few consecutive Sessions, to undo that which had been the work of years. He entreated them to remember that all the social evils of Ireland could not be remedied in an hour or a day; but that of necessity it must be a work of time to remedy all those evils, to eradicate all those prejudices, to allay all those animosities, which differences of race, differences of religion, and differences of social condition, had combined through a long period of time to create and to aggravate. He trusted most sincerely that they should all unite in the same earnest desire to bring to a happy conclusion that great work upon which they now proposed to enter. He believed that he had now touched upon all the questions alluded to in Her Majesty's most gracious Speech—touched upon them feebly he was aware, but still with a deep sense of their interest and importance, and it only remained for him to thank the House for the kind indulgence which they had granted him.

MR. SPEAKER then read the Speech and the Address. On the question being put that the Address be agreed to,

Mr. GRATTAN and Mr. DISRAELI rose together. The former Gentleman, however, gave way, when—

MR. DISRAELI rose and said: I am sure, Sir, that Her Majesty, since Her accession, has never yet delivered a gracious Speech to Her Parliament in which She has felt it Her duty to allude to subjects of such great importance as in that Speech to which we have listened to-day; but I am bound to say, that both in that Speech, which Her Majesty has been advised to address to Her Parliament, and in that answer which has now been proposed for us to offer at the foot of the Throne, I do not find that a fair and candid statement is conveyed as to the condition of this country—not a candid statement either as regards the internal condition of this country or its external relations. At this moment, important and numerous as are the subjects for our consideration, doubtless the most exigent would seem to be the state of Ireland. The language which I find in the note that I have made of the Speech, does not convey to me the impression that Her Majesty's Ministers are of opinion that the state of Ireland requires any immediate remedy. The language is obscure; and if it can be satisfactorily explained, it will show the advantage of discussion in the present instance. I find it stated that "the operation of the laws for the relief of the poor in Ireland will properly be a subject of early inquiry;" "and any measures by which those laws may be beneficially amended, and the condition of the people may be improved, will receive my cordial assent." Now, I think it is of very great importance to know what Her Majesty's Ministers mean to convey by the phrase "early inquiry." Is it an inquiry, for example, by a Committee of the House of Commons? In that case the "inquiry," no doubt, might be early, but the conclusion most probably would be late. And why an inquiry by a Committee of the House of Commons? We have had sufficient experience, I think, of what inquiries by Committees of the House of Commons may accomplish upon subjects upon which an Administration, duly informed, ought to have initiated measures. I do not see why, in the present instance, for example, the case of the poor-law in Ireland should be an exception to that experience. You have a Poor Law Commission in Ireland—you have a Government Board in Ireland; and I want to know from what sources can the Administration obtain more ample and satisfactory information than from such quarters? They ought to be in possession of the information; if they think there ought to be an alteration in the laws, they ought to be prepared to legislate upon that well-digested information. They have had sufficient time well to consider the authentic information that has reached them; and certainly, in the present state of Ireland, if the only measure that Her Majesty's Ministers are about to bring forward with respect to that country is the proposition of an inquiry into the operation of the poor-law by a Parliamentary Committee, I think that is a course neither satisfactory nor statesmanlike. I do not doubt for a moment—no one can—the urgency of the state of Ireland. Hon. Gentlemen who represent that country have much to answer for, in my opinion, to their constituents. They have to consider whether the state of Ireland is merely brought about by the present operation of the poor-laws—whether it may not have been in a great degree occasioned and aggravated by other measures which they supported, and by the non-adoption of other measures which they opposed—measures to which, by the by, they gave their private encouragement, and offered their public opposition. Therefore, when Gentlemen representing Ireland come forward and complain of the condition of Ireland, it is well that they should recollect how far they individually may be responsible for the present state of Ireland. I believe I see a Gentleman opposite who represents a county in Ireland. I read a speech of his at a county meeting the other day; I read the reasons he alleged for the present condition of Ireland; and one of the weightiest was the repeal of the corn law in the year of our Lord 1846. But when I referred to the list of those who voted for that repeal, I found in it the name of that worthy knight of the shire. I think it is well for us to consider whether these circumstances—Irish Members complaining so much who supported that repeal, and who opposed measures that were brought forward on this side of the House, privately encouraged at meetings holden by those very same Members—are to be forgotten at this moment. I confess it is a subject upon which I have little inclination or heart to dwell upon the present occasion. There was a policy once proposed in this House with respect to Ireland, which by the Irish Members was defeated, but which, if it had been pursued, would have produced a very different effect from what we now see in that country—a policy which subsequently was partially pursued, even by the Government who then opposed it. The proposer of that policy is no longer among us. At a time when everything that is occurring vindicates his prescience and demands his energy, we have no longer his sagacity to guide or his courage to sustain us. In the midst of the Parliamentary strife, that plume can soar no more round which we loved to rally. But he has left us the legacy of heroes—the memory of his great name, and the inspiration of his great example. Sir, there is one subject, I confess, with regard to Ireland, which I am glad to see has been omitted from Her Majesty's Speech. I think I may congratulate the House, the country, and the Government, that they have not brought forward a measure with respect to Ireland, the only recommendation of which was the traditionary approbation of statesmen who existed half a century ago, and who, if they were not mistaken in the opinion that they then adopted, at least formed that opinion under circumstances very different to those under which we unhappily now live; a measure which it was rumoured was to be introduced the moment Parliament assembled, the rumour assuming at one time all the colour of authenticity. I think it is a matter of congratulation, with all the difficulties which we have to encounter, that we have not that measure introduced—a measure which, while it would violate principle, could not accomplish, as it appears to me, any of the objects of policy—which must, under all circumstances, be a great blow to the Church, from sanctioning a too prevalent misconception as to the tenure under which the ecclesiastical estates is holden—a measure which would not conciliate those whom it was projected to please, and which would at the same time have outraged the sentiments and convictions of the great majority of the population of the three kingdoms. I think that omission from Her Majesty's Speech is a significant subject for congratulation. It argues, I think, rather a want of resource in the statesmen of the present age, that their only expedient for the cure of Irish evils should be the revival of an antiquated project, which really is not suited to the spirit of the age in which we live, or to the present condition of these kingdoms. I trust we shall hear no more of that project. Of this I am certain, that it will never bear discussion in this House, and that no Parliament will pass it that fairly represents the opinion of the people of these realms. Sir, there are three paragraphs in Her Majesty's Speech which I must describe as congratulatory paragraphs; they refer to the state of commerce, to the state of manufactures, and to the state of the revenue. There can be but one feeling of satisfaction among Gentlemen on either side of the House, at hearing that there is an increase of employment in the manufacturing districts, especially among those Gentlemen who come from rural regions, because certainly they cannot assure the House that there is any increase of employment in that quarter. But I am bound to say that when I am called upon to express great satisfaction that commerce is reviving from those checks which during the last Session we had to deplore, I am required to assent to a statement which appears to me contrary to fact, and which, under the authority of Parliament, is calculated to convey to the people a very deceptive conclusion. Taking a general view of the commercial position of this country at the present moment, it appears to me that the country is greatly suffering. It cannot be denied that the exports have fallen off by millions; that that decay has been, though rapid, in a certain sense gradual, and that it has taken place under a new commercial system. That commercial system was introduced to our notice and adopted by our votes, on the observation of three years; and now we bring to the consideration of its results also the observation of a period of equal duration. I am willing to admit—more than willing to admit, I am anxious to enforce—the expediency of the most unimpassioned spirit in discussing now our commercial system. When these alterations were proposed, they were theoretical projects, and our apprehensions were equally theoretical; it is not at all surprising that under such circumstances there should have been in our discussion some heat and passion; but when we have results before us, when we have facts to deal with that are official, conclusions that cannot be contradicted, all that we have got to do is to exercise the common sense which I trust we all possess, and draw those deductions which no one can deny, if they are founded upon data the authenticity of which no one disputes. In my opinion the new commercial system, the results of which are referred to in the Speech, has had a trial, a fair trial, and has failed. [" Hear, hear!" *and some murmurs.*] I am aware of what may be urged on the other hand; I hear murmurs that are repeating the arguments which are daily produced; it will be said, " True it is, the new commercial system has been on trial for some three years, but it has had to encounter exceptional circumstances which no one could have anticipated." [" Hear, hear!"] " Hear, hear!" Exactly; you agree to my statement of your own case. " The new commercial system has had to encounter a famine of corn in Europe, a famine of cotton in America; it has had to encounter more than these two great disadvantages—it has had to encounter convulsion throughout the Continent; you cannot, therefore, be surprised that the system under such circumstances should have failed." Now let us look at the facts of the case. I am anxious to test the results of our commercial system in a manner most advantageous to the opinions of Gentlemen opposite; I will test the effect of your measures upon the markets which you have most lauded—your chosen markets, and with reference to their effect upon that branch of industry whose interest you most advocate, and which all must acknowledge to be the most important in the country, because all interests in the country in turn are obliged to bow to it. I will see, for example, how your new commercial system has worked between England and the United States; and I will select your favourite instance of the cotton manufacture. I will not weary you now by referring in detail to elaborate statistics; I have them here. I will give you the conclusions at which I have arrived upon official statements to which you can appeal; and if you doubt those conclusions, in the course of the Session there will be plenty of opportunities of refuting them. In the year 1847 the importations from the United States into this country were the greatest in amount upon record; there was an importation of what in the American language is called "breadstuffs" to so great an amount that the extra profit of the Americans upon breadstuffs, as compared with the prices in 1848, amounted to 5,300,000*l.* sterling; so that besides the ample and sufficient profit the Americans would have obtained, under any circumstances, by the prices of 1848 for example, the excess of price in 1847, in consequence of the famine of corn in Europe, gave them an extra profit of 5,300,000*l.*; while, in consequence of the famine of cotton in the United States, although they sent a much less quantity than in the preceding years, the extra profits upon cotton, compared with the prices of 1846, amounted to 3,200,000*l.*; therefore the Americans received from us an extra profit that year of 8,500,000*l.* Surely, then, 1847, by the magnitude of its transactions, was a year extremely favourable to commercial interchange, and therefore your two great evils of corn famine in Europe and cotton famine in America combined together to test the principles of your new commercial system with every possible advantage. The natural question is, what did the Americans take from us in exchange under these circumstances? Now, we have the complete returns upon this point before us; and I find that they took of our cotton manufactures, in round numbers, 60,000,000 of yards extra. Instead of 25,000,000 which they took from us before the change of the law, they took in 1847, under the remarkable circumstances I have stated, 85,000,000 of yards; an amount, by the by, not equal to that which the old Levantine market takes at the present moment. One might pause to consider, whether taking 60,000,000 yards more of your manufactures is an equivalent exchange for the immense importations you received from, and the immense price you paid to, the United States. But it so happens that the returns before us prove that even these 60,000,000 of yards were not an exchange at all in reference to the operation of the new law, because it appears by the official returns of the United States, that their home manufactures were increasing at the rate of 30,000 bales per annum; but in the year 1847, in consequence of the high price of cotton, and the commercial circumstances that allowed her to import our manufactures much cheaper than she could manufacture them herself, her domestic manufactures only increased by the consumption of 5,000 bales. Now, 25,000 bales, the decreased amount of the American home consumption, would produce about 60,000,000 of yards, the increased amount of British exportation to the United States; and so, if you had not taken her breadstuffs, she would equally in that year have imported from you a much larger amount of your goods. This is proved from the circumstance, that in 1848, the consumption of cotton in her own manufactures increased 100,000 bales; and the amount of your manufactures imported into the United States has fallen off in that year more than 30,000,000 of yards. The two famines of corn and cotton, which you say have prevented your system from having a fair chance, combined, in fact, to give you a chance with the United States which probably you will never enjoy again. Now, with respect to the third alleged cause of failure. Have we not every day since Parliament was prorogued—in morning journal and in evening paper, and in weekly oracles—have we not, while all of us deplored the state of our manufactures, been told that with the convulsions on the Continent it was only what was to be expected—that, in the present state of the Continent, it was no wonder the manufactures of Manchester could not be disposed of? But from the official returns we now possess, it appears that to the continent of Europe you have exported more cotton goods than you did the year before; so that the third great cause which has been so widely circulated to account for your failure turns out to be a highly favourable though an exceptional cause, no doubt, to the development of your system. There are also other circumstances never referred to by Gentlemen opposite, also exceptional causes, but still highly favourable to the experiment of your new system, and on which you cannot count any longer. In the first place, this very famine of corn in Europe prevented that agricultural distress which we knew to be inevitable, and which we are now beginning to feel. You have thus hitherto been sustained by that home market which your policy was calculated to injure; and therefore that is a fourth exceptional circumstance on which you cannot again count. But there is another view of this question. Men who have deeply considered the subject of commercial interchange without any of our passions, men not connected with the parties of the State, men who wrote before this experiment was even thought of, have always taught us that if you attempt to fight hostile tariffs with free imports, independently of many evils that all are familiar with, such a policy would have a dangerous effect on the distribution of the precious metals—an effect dangerous to all countries, but more particularly to a country like England, with her fixed debt and great fixed payments. Well, what has happened? Why, that the very convulsion of Europe which you assign as one of the reasons of the failure of your commercial system, has saved you from that great evil; has saved you from the inevitable consequences of your rash legislation; it has brought the precious metals into this country, and that through the medium, not of commercial transactions, but of political circumstances. Thus, in fact, there are five important circumstances which have acted in favour of your system, and which have tended to diminish and soften those inevitable evils which have been experienced, while you have been running about the country telling us they were the causes of the failure of your system. The question then arises, why has your system failed? It has failed, because the countries whose productions you so humbly take without conditions, will not take your productions in exchange. I have shown you the operation of the system in the instance of the United States under the greatest stimulus that ever acted favourably to commercial intercourse between two countries, namely, with a corn famine in Europe, and a cotton famine in America. Receiving from you an extra profit of 8,500,000*l.* in 1848, you could only get 60,000,000 yards extra taken from you, and then the next year these imports to the United States fall down one half. Look at your position with the Brazils. Every one recollects the glowing accounts of the late Vice-President of the Board of Trade with respect to the Brazilian trade—that trade for which you sacrificed your own colonies. There is an increase in the trade with the Brazils of 26,500,000 of yards in 1846 over 1845; and 18,500,000 yards in 1847 over 1845; and this increase has so completely glutted that market, that goods are selling at Rio and Bahia at cost price. It is stated in the *Mercantile Journal*, that—

> " It is truly alarming to think what may be the result of a continuance of imports, not only in the face of a very limited inquiry, but at a period of the year when trade is almost always at a stand. Why cargo after cargo of goods be sent hither is an enigma we cannot solve. Some few vessels have yet to arrive ; and, although trade may probably revive in the beginning of 1849, what will become of the goods received and to be received ? This market cannot consume them. Stores, warehouses, and the custom-house, are full to repletion ; and if imports continue upon the same scale as heretofore, and sales have to be forced, we may yet have to witness the phenomenon of all descriptions of piece goods being purchased here below the prime cost in the country of production."

Such is the state of matters in these two markets; the importance of which you have so much vaunted, and to obtain which for your cotton goods you have undergone such vast sacrifices. I do not see that your position in Europe is better. Russia is still hermetically sealed, and Prussia is not yet shaken. I know that there are some who hold that it is a matter of no consequence how much we may export, who say that foreigners will not give us their productions for nothing, and that therefore we have no occasion to concern ourselves as to the means and modes of repayment. There is no doubt that foreigners will not give us their goods without some exchange for them; but the question which the people of this country are considering is, what are the terms of exchange most beneficial for us to adopt ? That is the whole question. You may glut markets, as I have shown you have succeeded in doing; but the only effect of your system—of your attempting to struggle against these hostile tariffs by opening your ports, is, that you exchange more of your own labour every year and every month for a less quantity of foreign labour, that you render British labour or native industry less efficient, that you degrade British labour, necessarily diminish profits, and therefore must lower wages; while philosophical inquirers have shown that you will finally effect a change in the distribution of the precious metals that must be pernicious, and may be fatal, to this country. It is for these reasons that all practical men are impressed with the conviction that you should adopt reciprocity as the principle of your tariff — not merely from practical experience, but as an abstract truth. This was the principle of the commercial negotiations at Utrecht —which were followed by Mr. Pitt in his commercial negotiations at Paris—which formed the groundwork of the instructions to Mr. Eden, most ably pursued by that distinguished man—and which was wisely adopted and applied by the Cabinet of Lord Liverpool; but which was deserted, flagrantly and unwisely, in 1846. There is another reason why you can no longer delay the consideration of your commercial system. You can no longer delay considering the state of your colonies. This is an age of principles, and no longer of political expedients : you yourselves are the disciples of economy; and you have on every occasion enunciated the principle that the colonies of England are an integral part of this country. You ought, then, to act towards your colonies upon the principle you have adopted, but which you have never practised. But observe how the principle of reciprocity would enable you to reconstruct your commercial system in a manner beneficial to the mother country, and advantageous to the colonies. By extending the tariff of the metropolis to the colonies, you would either secure to them a legitimate advantage in the home market ; or, on the other hand, their participation in an interchange of mutual benefit with foreign countries. Reciprocity, indeed, is the only principle on which a large and expansive system of commerce can be founded. Reciprocity is indeed a great principle. It is at once cosmopolitan and national. The system you are pursuing is one quite contrary : you go on fighting hostile tariffs with free imports, and the consequence is, that you are following a course most injurious to the commerce of the country. And every year, at the commencement of the Session, you come down not to congratulate the House and the country on the state of our commerce, but to explain why it suffers, why it is prostrate; and you seem yourselves happy on this occasion to be able to say, that it is recovering—from what ? From unparalleled distress. I will not trouble the House on this occasion with details. There is no mystery about these statistics. They are drawn up from the official returns in the library upstairs, and have no advantage beyond being comprehensive and accurate. But there is one result which I wish fairly to put before the country. I wish to show the effect of our colonial trade on that very industry which is the great advocate in this country for sacrificing that colonial trade—I mean the industry of Lancashire. I shall be mistaken if hon. Gentlemen are not somewhat surprised at the result I shall place before them. I am going to take a general view of the exports of cotton goods for the space of the last sixteen years. The exports of calicoes plain and printed for the last sixteen years, namely, from 1831 to 1846, both to British and foreign possessions, are: — to all foreign parts, 5,913,506,603 yards; to British colonies, 3,269,754,578 yards; so that the colonies have taken 313,000,277 yards more than half the rest of the world. In the same period Canada has taken 261,291,482 yards, and the British West Indies 418,991,491 yards, while the United States have taken 514,889,624 yards, so that the American colonies have taken 165,000,000 more than the whole of the United States. In the same period the British West Indies have taken more than the foreign West Indies by the amount of 86,475,524 yards; while India and China, as compared with the Brazils, have exceeded the latter by 903,410,444 yards. Perhaps it may be said, that in taking so large a period as sixteen years, I may have obtained a deceptive average as to the latter and more important years of that term. Well, I have divided the sixteen years into two portions of eight years each, and I find that in the last eight years, compared with the first eight, there has been an increase to British possessions, compared with foreign parts, of 1,566,792,086 against 1,000,645,008, giving an increase to our own possessions of upwards of 516,000,000. In the same period, the proportionate increase to British colonies, compared with foreign Europe, is 738,000,000 of yards. In the same period, the increase to British North America, compared with the United States, has been 69,341,000 yards. The increase to the British colonies, compared with the whole of foreign America, is as follows: —increase to the colonies, 1,430,217,920 yards; foreign America, 310,212,971 yards; greater increase to the colonies, 1,120,000,949 yards. The decrease to the United States in the last eight years is 105,932,279 yards. In the total exports of cotton manufactures to all parts there has been in 1847-48 a decrease as compared with 1844-45 of 174,633,675 yards; the decrease in the British possessions has been 232,569,836 yards; the increase to foreign parts is 57,940,151 yards. As to sugar-growing countries, the total decrease to British sugar-growing colonies, since the Act of 1846, is 143,779,144 yards; while the increase to foreign sugar-growing countries is only 13,792,885 yards. These are instructive data, taken from our own official documents, and this is the result of your new commercial system. These documents are drawn up by your own officers, sometimes doctored by your own officers; and yet, in the face of these, you are calling upon the House of Commons to express an opinion that we are enjoying a wholesale and satisfactory revival of trade. I will not dwell on the revenue. It seems that the voice of the Government, so far as the Speech is concerned, is not exceedingly strong on that point; and when I recollect what has been the principal source of the increase of which we have heard, and that on the very day on which Parliament meets, that source has expired, I am not surprised at the lowness of their tone; but I do not feel justified in congratulating the country upon it. I should have thought, rather, that the state of the revenue, and the state of the laws affecting the revenue, might have forced Ministers to well consider the principles on which the commercial code of the country should be established; that, in consequence of their old opinions, they would have held that reciprocity ought to be the acknowledged principle of our trade, and that it was the only principle that, wisely managed, could have reconstructed with any satisfaction our colonial system. I now approach a more interesting portion of Her Majesty's Speech than any of the others to which our attention has been called; but I have felt it my duty, in vindication of those opinions which, though outnumbered on them, we are still prepared to support, to place those views before the country—confident, and never more confident, that ultimately they will be adopted by that public opinion which is now rising to uphold the principle I have advocated. I will now endeavour to call attention to those more lively and stimulating subjects which formed the principal part of the address of the noble Lord (Lord H. Vane). I confess that when I listened to Her Majesty's most gracious Speech, and still more to the well-trained echo it called forth, I was surprised at the moral courage of Her Majesty's Ministers. It is the first time since I have had the honour of a seat in this House that the Sovereign has met Parliament and not been able to congratulate the House of Commons that she has received from all Her Allies expressions of their continued amity. That most significant omission, however, got over, Her Majesty has been advised to feel "it satisfactory to be able to state that both in the north and in the south of Europe the contending parties have consented to a suspension of arms for the purpose of negotiating terms of peace." Now, that expression is to me very obscure, and rather diplomatic than Parliamentary. Who are the contending Powers? Are they Her Majesty's Allies? Where are they? I have heard indeed that in the north of Europe there was a suspension of arms. It turns out that this is the case with regard to a State to whose position I had the honour of calling the attention of the House in May last—the valiant and indomitable kingdom of Denmark; and I believe that if the course I then recommended had been followed, there would have been not only a suspension of arms, but an established peace. But what suspension of arms has taken place in the south of Europe, is to me a mystery; and probably we shall be enlightened on the subject by some Member of the Government. Has there been a suspension of arms between Austria and Sardinia? Or is it a suspension of arms between his Holiness the Pope and the Prince of Canino. I should have thought at first that a suspension of arms might have taken place in the case of another Power in the south of Europe, had I not encountered some paragraphs conceived in a spirit of such impenetrable obscurity that I am really at a loss to annex any very definite idea to them. We are told that the "hostilities carried on in the island of Sicily were attended with circumstances so revolting, that the British and French admirals were impelled by motives of humanity to interpose, and to stop the further effusion of blood." Now, are we to understand that the further effusion of blood was stayed by the French and British admirals without any instructions from Her Majesty's Ministers? Or is the policy of England dictated by a French admiral? I can conceive nothing more preposterous—I should say nothing more improbable—did I not recollect a remarkable debate in another place at the end of the last Session, in which direct inquiries were made of Her Majesty's Ministers on this very point, and on the probable conduct of the British admiral. I remember the mysterious answer to the person who made that inquiry; but I could not have imagined that after that inquiry and reply the British and French admirals riding at anchor in those waters would, acting only on their own haphazard views of things, take proceedings of the gravest character between a Sovereign and his subjects. If this be the suspension of arms in the south of Europe on which we are now congratulated, and, in return, asked to congratulate the Crown, I, for one, must desire to be excused from such a course. Then follows the following illustrative paragraph:—

> "I have availed myself of the interval thus obtained, to propose, in conjunction with France, to the King of Naples, an arrangement calculated to produce a permanent settlement of affairs in Sicily. The negotiation on these matters is still pending."

Now, in the first place, I have no idea who the King of Naples is. I never heard of the King of Naples. Probably some Member of Her Majesty's Government will tell us who he is. These are days of great diplomatic confusion and rapid political change; and, for aught I know, some such Power may have arisen; but I do not think it is as yet recognised. Why, I should have as soon thought of hearing a speech from the Queen of London as to hear of such a Power as the King of Naples. It appears that the Two Sicilies is no longer to be mentioned, but we are to be treated with a perfectly new title, in order, I suppose, to prepare us for the change that is intended. "Negotiation," we are told, "on these matters is still pending." What negotiation? Has His Majesty the King of the Two Sicilies agreed to any negotiation, or to any suspension of arms? Has he given in his adhesion to any mediation on the part of the British and French admirals? These are points requiring explanation; for to me it does not appear that anybody is negotiating except ourselves. Then we are told that—

> "It is my constant desire to maintain with all foreign States the most friendly relations."

But we are not told, as generally we are told, that all foreign States are also anxious to maintain the most friendly relations with us. It would be highly satisfactory to know if Her Majesty has any allies left: if the progress of diplomacy has at least left her with some well-wishers. I am not surprised that Her Majesty's Government have found it neessary to address Parliament in terms so vague and so obscure about the foreign relations of this country. Since we met this time last year, there has been a considerable change on the continent of Europe. The result has not been extremely satisfactory. Look at the state of France—look at the state of the whole centre of Europe, the fairest and most favoured, the most civilised countries. I find in France a republic without republicans, and in Germany an empire without an emperor; and this is progress! This is the brilliant achievement of universal suffrage — the high politic consummation of the sovereignty of the people! Yes! these are the constitutional models and the political exemplars that are to fashion the future of our free and famous England. It would be a scene of unrivalled absurdity were not the circumstances connected with it calculated to create terror. There wanted but one ingredient in the mess to make the incantation perfectly infernal. A republic without republicans, an empire without an emperor, required only mediations without an object to mediate about: and the saturnalia of diplomacy would mix with the orgies of politics! Well, you have got them at length. I had the honour last year to warn the House against mock mediations; and I think the result has proved that a Member of Parliament had a right to inquire the object of a mediation, the means by which it was to be carried into effect, and particularly the parties between whom the mediation was to take place. There is a mediation in the case of Denmark, commenced last May; but nothing is yet concluded. You were called upon by Denmark to fulfil an unequivocal engagement in a treaty; and if, at the moment, you had acted with justice and firmness, you would, probably, have terminated a disgraceful proceeding. An ancient and independent kingdom is attacked by an assembly sitting in a German town. I look upon the Assembly at Frankfort as a German romance; but a German romance, we all know, may be a very pernicious thing. Nothing could be more unjust, and more violent, than the conduct of the Frankfort Assembly. The French Government, equally bound with ourselves to guarantee the rights of Denmark, offered to cooperate with us in their vindication. Now, I should not have been surprised that our Government had felt it its duty to have refused acting with France at that moment. The French Government was a Provisional Government; and it had hitherto been a rule with us, and, I think, a wise rule, not to recognise a Provisional Government. But the Provisional Government of General Cavaignac commanded the admiration of Her Majesty's Government—and they recognised it; and immediately they recognised it, it immediately fell. I expressed my opinion of that Government in this House before it fell—I formed that opinion because I was convinced it had no root in the country. Her Majesty's Ministers, however, thought otherwise. Why the Provisional Government of Louis Blanc and Lamartine was not equally recognised, I never could understand; but whenever a government composed of the editors of the *National*, and the soldier they engaged to support them, was formed, it was recognised at once; and I believe it had an ambassador in this country for about a fortnight. Yet, during its brief existence, the Danish question might have been settled; which remains now, after an interval of nearly a year, in the same unsatisfactory state as heretofore. I hope Her Majesty's Ministers mean to tell us what is the point on which the Government is mediating, and who are the parties between whom the mediation is taking place. What is your next mediation? The most preposterous of all! You imagined that the empire of Austria was in a state of dissolution. From the first squabble between the monarch and some of his subjects, you immediately assumed that Austria was to be blotted out of the map of nations; and accordingly you interfered—that is to say, you mediated; the Emperor of Austria shrinking from your mediation. And what has occurred? That empire has shown, as all those acquainted with its resources were well assured it would show, on the present occasion, as in the most memorable periods of its history, so profound a sagacity, and has availed itself of its resources in a manner so distinguished, that it stands in the eyes of Europe in a much more exalted position than before the struggle. It has settled Bohemia, one of its rebel kingdoms; it has resumed its authority in its ancient capital in a manner which cannot be too much commended for its wisdom and its firmness; and it has also entirely, and in a manner which has shown how completely the great body of the people must be with it, asserted its sovereignty in Hungary—another portion of the Austrian empire, where, I suppose, the "contending parties" have consented to a suspension of arms. Before you had established this mock mediation, recollect, also, that Lombardy was entirely reconquered, and in a manner the most complete and brilliant, by the arms of Austria. Look to your third mediation—the instance of Naples. Why, at this very moment, we have not any evidence that there exist two parties to that mediation, or the slightest evidence that any authority has established such a mediation, except a couple of Admirals. The King of the Two Sicilies was placed in a position to a portion of his subjects similar to that in which our Sovereign was placed with regard to her rebel subjects in Ireland, and was prepared to vindicate his authority over that rebellious portion of his kingdom. It would, I think, have been most blameable policy, if you had proposed to mediate between two parties standing in such a peculiar relation to each other, and had said to the King of Naples, "You shall not vindicate your authority." But you did not adopt that course; you allowed him to proceed; and he did vindicate his authority. One city alone stood out against him; and just as that city was upon the point of surrendering to its lawful sovereign, you advanced, and said to the King, "Here you must stop, we must now mediate." What, I ask, has been the consequence of these mediations? There have been two consequences, and both of a most injurious character. The first is, that in consequence of these mock mediations nothing has been settled. If Austria had been let alone, if the rights of the King of Denmark had been acknowledged, if the King of the Two Sicilies had been permitted to vindicate his authority, all would now have been tranquil; but all is now unsettled, or disturbed, because we pretend to be mediators. But suppose a war occurs—and by your present policy you are not fostering peace—how will you find yourselves circumstanced in consequence of these mediations? Why, you will not have a friend in any party in any country; but you will have offended all parties by one and the same mode. Take Naples—take the case of the Two Sicilies. You, by your language in Parliament, and by the hostile demonstrations of your fleet in the Bay of Naples, made the Sicilians assured that you were about to uphold their cause. Yet, standing aside, you permitted them to be beaten; therefore, for your deception, they mistrust you; while, on the other hand, because just at the moment when the King of Naples was about to become victorious over his rebel subjects, you interfered and deprived him of his victory, he also is alienated from you. In making these remarks, I am far from wishing to enforce a pedantic adherence to that passive policy which, in the barbarous dialect of the day, is called "non-intervention." On the contrary, I am persuaded that in the settlement of the great affairs of Europe, the presence of England is the best guarantee of peace. But it should be the presence of England in accordance with the law of nations, and with the stipulations of treaties. That we may be the champions of right, of law, and of justice, our interference must be in accordance with right, law, and justice. But what you are doing now is contrary to law, justice, and the stipulations of treaties; contrary, I believe, to the traditional policy of England. Last year, when you first began this eccentric course of policy, and when we first heard of our interference between the Emperor of Austria and the King of Sardinia, I ventured to ask what were the grounds of our interference? Were they political or sentimental? If political, I then said our course was simple, because we had only to look to our obligations under treaties. But if, on the contrary, Her Majesty's Government intended to adopt, with reference to our relations with other countries, the sentimental doctrine of nationality, then I contended they were entirely changing the policy of this country, and were consequently bound to come to Parliament and avow that they were about to change the whole foreign policy of England, in order that Parliament might discuss the wisdom of that change. Before I make a few observations on the interesting subject which is the topic of the day, I feel bound to those who, though not immediately my constituents, are persons whose interests I have often advocated in this House, to advert to one more mediation, and one of an unexampled character; I mean our interference in the waters of La Plata. I may briefly remind the House of the circumstances of that extraordinary case. Six confidential agents have been employed by Her Majesty's Government in connexion with La Plata, and some of them Ministers of the highest class. All have failed; the last, I believe, if not actually expelled, has been treated almost with personal indignity; a second-rate rebel colony of Spain imitating the mother country, and sending away our Minister. Is it possible to conceive that a negotiation has been going on for years in which important commercial interests are concerned, and that there should have been six missions fruitlessly undertaken, and yet that the House of Commons has never instituted any inquiry into the matter? I asked for the instructions sent to Lord Howden, but I was told it would be inconvenient to produce them, because another envoy was on his passage to succeed that noble Lord. But that other envoy has failed, and another since; therefore, I think, I may now venture to hope to have a copy of those instructions. Speaking of these Gentlemen, one is reminded of the mystic dynasties in Macbeth, "another and another still succeeds," though, to be sure, that is the only thing they don't do. I suspect there may be a reason why we don't hear so much of La Plata as we might have done. The Liverpool Reform Association, who have proved that diplomacy is a profession merely kept up to maintain the aristocracy, and that the wooden walls of Old England are only required to afford employment for younger sons might, one would have thought, have written a tract upon this subject; but, unhappily, it turns out that the merchants of Liverpool are the very persons who are responsible for all this interference. Faithful to their principles, the Liverpool Financial Reform Association—the advocates of retrenchment—are the very men to whom we are indebted for the expense of six missions, all of which have failed, to the great injury of our commercial interests in that part of the world. Great changes have occurred since I last had the honour of addressing this House. Empires have fallen; the Pope no longer reigns in Rome. Her Majesty's chief Secretary admits that she has no allies; but strange as these changes are, nothing is so marvellous as the fact upon which I have to congratulate Her Majesty's Ministers—and that is their conversion to the principles of financial reform. The age of miracles has not passed! But it would have been extremely satisfactory when that portion of the Speech which is addressed more particularly to the House of Commons was alluded to by the noble Lord (Lord Harry Vane), in which Her Majesty says, "I have directed the estimates for the service of the year to be laid before you; they will be framed with the most anxious attention to a wise economy:" it would, I say, have been satisfactory if some one of Her Majesty's Ministers had risen and explained the other portion of that part of the Speech which makes Her Majesty say, "The present aspect of affairs has enabled me to make large reductions on the estimates of last year." Why, Sir, the estimates prepared last year were also made with every possible attention to a wise economy. But it is somewhat strange that we should be told that the present aspect of affairs has enabled us to make large reductions. When we are so told this, the question naturally arises—What aspect? What is the impelling cause? What is this fresh discovery in the aspect of affairs which enables us to make large reductions? Is it what I read of in the Speech itself—the spirit of disaffection in Ireland? Is that the pressing cause? Is it—what I also read of in the Speech—the rebellion of a formidable character in the Punjaub? A possible insurrection in Ireland, or an actual rebellion in India? Is that the aspect of affairs that impels this great reduction? Or is it the circumstance that at this moment 2,000,000 armed and disciplined men are moving over the face of Europe in hostile array? Is that the aspect of affairs which enables Her Majesty's Ministers to make large reductions in the estimates of last year? Why, Sir, when we me tlast year, the Sovereigns of the world were not only Her Majesty's allies, but even her guests. The foreign affairs of this country were at that period so tranquil that it was difficult for the noble Lord who presided over that department to furnish a single paragraph to the Royal Speech. There was, indeed, a short notice of a treaty on the slave trade with some South American Republic of which not six Gentlemen in the House had ever before heard; but while that was the tranquil state of our foreign relations, our revenue was allowed, I believe, by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to be not in a more prosperous condition than at present. No one pretends that trade was more brisk last year than at present. But, in the face of all these circumstances—with India, too, as we were then informed, settled for ever—Ministers came forward, not to propose reductions, but increased expenditure—not a relief from burdens, but a proposition for increased taxation. How am I to reconcile this conduct on these two occasions? Then we were to have an increase of the forces. The militia were to be called out. What has happened since in our external relations to make an opposite policy advisable? I cannot, in any change which has occurred in Europe, find what is "the present aspect of affairs" which has impelled Her Majesty's Ministers to become financial reformers. One of my objects in rising is if possible to extract that instructive information from them. That there should be a necessity for making retrenchments is not at all surprising to any Gentleman sitting on this (the Opposition) side of the House, for we have been tampering with the resources of the country for years past. But independently of these considerations, it is not from Gentlemen on these benches that any opposition would probably be encountered to any well-considered measure for retrenchment. Firstly, because I believe there is no instance of a well-considered measure of retrenchment which has not been carried into effect by the Tory party; and, secondly, because, faithful to the great traditions of their political connexion, the Tory party will never forget that it is they who were the original opponents of any extravagantly conceived military establishments of this country. But saying this, Sir, I am sure that no Gentleman on these benches will approach in a light spirit, or touch with a careless hand, the military system of this country as at present established. They will respect that English fleet which is a name more influential with foreign Cabinets, than all the resources of our diplomacy: they will not tamper with the English regiment, which has become a name as famous as the Roman legion. Yet large reductions are to be made in the estimates of last year; and it is the "present aspect" of affairs that justifies the measure. Sir, it cannot be that Her Majesty's Ministers are converts to the perpetual peace theory. Because, if that be the case, and they continue Ministers, I shall not be satisfied with large reductions. We must, to use the language of the day, demand that they carry out their principle to the utmost. There have been, indeed, budgets upon that principle widely circulated. They have produced great effect. It is my business to discover whether they have inspired any portion of the paragraph in Her Majesty's Speech. The first of those budgets was that celebrated one which was received with acclamations, and proposed some little time ago. No sooner had that flagrant luminary overtopped the horizon, than in a more northern atmosphere a parhelion appeared, which exposed its modest disc in mitigated splendour, but which figured as an almost equal portent in the economical atmosphere. In respect to these two propositions—without reference to any opinions which I may hereafter express concerning them—I will say that I have little objection: I have no objection to the people being relieved from taxation to the amount of 5,000,000*l*. or 10,000,000*l*., whether by the hon. Members for the West Riding or Glasgow; all I wish to ascertain, is the source from which these sums are to accrue.

> "Quibus divitias pollicentur ab illis drachmam petunt
> De divitiis deducant drachmam."

So I say deduct your 10,000,000*l*. or your 5,000,000*l*. from that inexhaustible treasury—that more than Californian gold—the 100,000,000*l*. per annum, or 2,000,000*l*. sterling per week, which was to be realised by the repeal of the corn laws. I take it for granted it is not possible that Her Majesty's Ministers are about arbitrarily to assume a particular period for the expenditure of this country, and not to regulate that expenditure by the necessities of the kingdom. This, I know, that whenever a Government in this country has advocated retrenchment, not from circumstances justified by our external or domestic position, but with reference to "the present aspect of affairs," the consequence which has always followed such rash and unadvised retrenchment has been an increased expenditure. There was, it is true, a considerable saving in the year 1835; but we had at that time a very weak Government, though composed of very able men, and I regret their fall; but I have always felt that the retrenchments effected in 1835 were too much the consequence of the Parliamentary position of the party then in power; and what followed? The moment they made those retrenchments—from causes not arising from the external condition of the country, but rather from a rash domestic cry—foreign Powers (this was in 1835-6) observing that this country was reducing its establishments without any reference to their policy, but to their Parliamentary position, immediately increased their force, and commenced a policy which we were ultimately obliged to check. And thus a very short time after the fall of the Government of 1835, there was a great increase of expenditure. So again, in 1830, we also, unfortunately, had a weak Government, though formed of able men, who made retrenchments merely to please the public; and what happened? No sooner had that Government—led by a man no less eminent and illustrious than the Duke of Wellington—adopted this course, than the system of foreign Powers immediately changed; and had it not been for the revolution of 1830, an alliance would have taken place between Russia and France to obtain those objects which our policy has always resisted. But I cannot believe that the Government will regulate the expenditure with an arbitrary reference to a particular year, and not by the exigency of the case. But if by the exigency of the case, what difference is there between the circumstances of this year and the last? Here is a choice opportunity for every chief of an important department to advance to-night, and inform us of the favourable change of circumstances in India or in Ireland, on the Continent or in the Treasury, which renders retrenchment so much more practicable this year than during the last. The task would not be too easy. And when the noble Lord the Premier may sum up the case, it will tax the artifice of that rhetoric of which he is a master to explain their present situation satisfactorily to the country. What I contend is, that your Address to the Throne does not contain a candid exposition of the state of the country. I must ascertain, if possible, what the present aspect of affairs is. I must follow the strategy of a great master of rhetoric, and exhaust the possible causes. I must endeavour to ascertain if Her Majesty's Government are votaries of the oracles of Manchester. There have been of late several potent reasons enunciated why it is totally impossible that this or any other country can ever again go to war, and therefore, why the expenditure may be cut down at least 10,000,000*l*. But is this the opinion of the noble Lord the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs? Is it the opinion of his Colleagues? It is said, for example, that the French nation certainly can never go to war again in consequence of the tenure of land in that country—the subdivision of land has produced seven millions of proprietors, who bear the burden of taxation, and who will no longer submit to its increase for warlike adventures. But when I remember that the same tenure of land existed in that country forty and fifty years ago—during the Consulate and the Empire—that the number of proprietors holding under that tenure was, in comparison with the population, equally great to what it is at present, and that with that tenure of land we had wars between the whole Continent and the French Empire, I doubt the validity of the reason thus assigned why France cannot go to war. But this is one of the Manchester oracles, and I want to know whether it is accepted as doctrine by Her Majesty's Government? Again, I would venture to inquire whether Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that the present state of Europe is a state not of war but of revolution, and that consequently no danger of hostilities is to be apprehended, since the tendencies of revolutions are adverse to warfare? I should like to know the noble Lord's opinion upon that. First, as an abstract proposition, I doubt it; I think the tendencies of revolutions are not friendly to peace civil or foreign. They render the fruits of industry uncertain; they disturb the markets of patient labour; they depreciate and endanger capital; they inflame the passions, and develop the military spirit. But let us look to facts. We had a revolution in this country in 1688—a complete revolution—the dynasty was changed, and certainly the new Sovereign did not reign in the hearts of his people. It took sixty years before the new system could be firmly established in this country; and yet immediately after that revolution we entered into a war which was certainly not the least glorious, and perhaps the longest or most comprehensive in which we ever embarked. But it may be said that this is an aristocratic country, and that that was an aristocratic war, incurred to promote the fortunes of the younger sons of the nobility. But France was not an aristocratic State. France had its revolution at the end of the last century—a revolution undertaken under the inspiration of the perpetual peace principle. I have read a speech delivered by Robespierre in the Convention that was worthy of the Free Trade Hall itself; and I have no doubt, had he lived in the present day, he would have been a member of the League. Well, did the revolution in France prevent the people of France from going to war? On the contrary, it made them conquer Europe. Constitutional Governments are now established in Europe, and peace is therefore certain, because constitutional Governments never go to war. Well, there is a third oracle which I am curious to ascertain, whether it have changed the policy of the Cabinet. The noble Secretary will, perhaps, inform us whether constitutional Governments are established in Europe. As far as I have been able to form any opinion of the tendency of the popular schemes that have prevailed during the past year, they are of invasion, of annexation, of violent and unjust courses against the neighbour that may be not as strong as themselves. The reason of this change in the policy of the Government, then, must be, that they hold that conquest is now out of the question, because no conquest that has taken place during the last century has not proved a source of weakness and embarrassment to the conqueror. But is this so? What do the promulgators of this dogma say to the conquest of Malta? Is that a source of weakness to England? Or of Gibraltar? What do you think of the conquest of Silesia by Prussia, which converted Prussia from a second-rate Power, not only to a first-rate, but to a Power whose possible height at this moment we are not capable of estimating? What of the acquisitions of Servia and of Transylvania by Austria, which laid the foundation of her military colonies which have twice saved the empire? What think you also of the conquests of Russia? I speak not of her Asian conquests, any more than of our own during this period, nor of the conquest of Poland, though I believe it to be one of the great sources of her strength; but what is thought of her acquisitions in the south, the whole of Southern Russia, the Cherson, Taurida, Bessarabia—regions of immense wealth and unquestionable sources of vast power, and all conquered in the memory of our fathers? There is a fifth and final and overwhelming reason given by the illuminati of Manchester why war is no longer possible. A great discovery has been made by these Gentlemen. It seems that a new principle has entered into politics, which entirely changes the aspect of affairs, and all the motives and conclusions of human conduct—and that is the principle of race. It has been discovered that it is quite impossible for the Emperor of Austria to retain Lombardy, because Lombardy is peopled by a race different from the Germans—the Latin race, who will not endure to be governed by a foreign master. Is this principle adopted by the noble Secretary? It will facilitate his mediations. Have these Gentlemen ever read Dante? If not, they may perhaps rise from the perusal of the great Florentine with juster notions of Italian politics, than they seem at present to have imbibed. Why, this difference of race in Lombardy has existed for almost countless centuries. But this principle of race is unfortunately one of the reasons why I fear war may always exist; because race implies difference, difference implies superiority, and superiority leads to predominance. The Gentlemen who have set up this theory of race have, in fact, adopted a principle totally opposed to the very foundation of that system which they vaunted last year, because the principle of race is quite opposed to the principles of equality and fraternity, which are the very basis of all their economics. Sir, it is said that this country must be content with a less demonstration of brute force. I am not prepared to impugn that position; but perhaps I may not associate with the phrase "brute force," the same meaning as those who are apt to use it. An army, a highly disciplined army, impelled by the sense of a great duty, the maintenance of order, the defence of their country, the vindication of the national honour, or the consolidation of the national strength; a body of men thus organised and influenced, and led by some of the choicest spirits of our species, an Alexander or a Cæsar, a Turenne, or our own Wellesley, I say that in a body of men thus disciplined, animated, and guided, it appears to me that moral power is as necessary, as essential, an element as physical energy. But, if on the other hand, I find a man with a certain facility of speech, and in a position happily adapted to his purpose, using those means and qualities to inflame the passions of large bodies of his fellow countrymen and stir them up against the institutions of his country, that is what I hold to be a demonstration of brute force, which I believe this country would be very well content to do without; and which, if there be any sense and spirit left in the men of light and leading in this country, they will resolve to quell as an intolerable and ignominious tyranny. I have often observed that the hangers-on of the new system are fond of quoting the trite apothegm of the great Swedish Minister, who said, "With how little wisdom a nation may be governed." My observations for the last few years have led me to a conclusion, not exactly similar, but analogous with that thought. Were I blessed with offspring, like Oxenstiern, I would rather address the being for whose existence I was responsible in this way. I would say, "My son, you see with how much ignorance you can agitate a nation." Yes! but the Queen's Ministers are truckling to these men. That is the position of affairs. Her Majesty's Ministers have yielded to public opinion. Public opinion on the Continent has turned out to be the voice of secret societies; and public opinion in England is the clamour of organised clubs. Her Majesty's Ministers have yielded to public opinion as a tradesman does who has failed in an attempt at extortion—he yields to public opinion when he takes a less sum. So the financial affairs of this country are to be arranged, not upon principles of high policy or from any imperial considerations, but because there is an unholy pressure from an arrogant minority, and who are confident of success because they think that they have beaten two Prime Ministers. Opinion is stronger than truth, according to Sophocles; I prefer truth, particularly in Her Majesty's Government, and therefore I shall move an Amendment. I honestly believe that the Address we are called upon to vote does not give a candid and ingenuous opinion to the Throne, as to the present condition of the country. I have drawn up an Amendment couched in no partisan or inflammatory spirit, but which I do believe does give an honest and fair representation of the present aspect of affairs to the Throne. The hon. Member here read the words of his proposed Amendment, to the effect—

"We regret, however, to be compelled humbly to represent to Your Majesty, that neither Your Majesty's relations with Foreign Powers, nor the state of the Revenue, nor the condition of the Commercial or Manufacturing Interests, are such as, in our opinion, to justify us in addressing Your Majesty in the language of congratulation; and that large portions of the Agricultural and Colonial Interests of the Empire are labouring under a state of progressive depression, calculated to excite serious apprehension and anxiety."

That is the Amendment which I beg to propose. I have thought it my duty to notice the crude and pestilent speculations now afloat respecting financial reform, not only because I consider them to be very dangerous to the country, not only because, according to rumour, they have converted a Government, but because avowedly on the part of their promulgators they only tend to ulterior purposes. This I must say of the new revolution, that its proceedings are characterised by frank audacity. They have already menaced the Church; they have scarcely spared the Throne. They have denounced the constitutional estates of the realm as antiquated and cumbrous machinery, not adapted to the necessities of the present age. No doubt, for the expedition of business, a Financial Reform Association presents greater facilities than the House of Commons. Little fear there of those collisions of argument and intellect which we here experience; they have no discussions and no doubts; but I have little fear that this go-a-head system will supersede the sagacity and matured wisdom of an English Parliament; and so long as this House remains the chosen temple of free discussion, I have no apprehension, whatever party may be in power, that the people of England will be in favour of the new societies. I am perfectly aware of the difficulties which the Gentlemen on this side have to encounter in this struggle. If I were to listen to the traditionary, petty, and prudential reasons which regulate Parliamentary proceedings in ordinary times, I should probably be led to believe that in moving an Amendment to the Address I was acting an unwise part. But I believe the Amendment to be justified by facts; and it is to the country I address myself in doing, in this instance, what I conceive to be my duty. I say that I know the difficulties which we have to encounter—the dangers which are looming in the distance. The hon. Gentleman who is the chief originator of the movement, made a just observation when he frankly admitted that the best chance for the new revolution lay in the dislocation of parties in this House. I told you that when I ventured to address some observations to the House almost in the last hour of the last Session. I saw the difficulty which such a state of things would inevitably produce. But let us not despair—we have, notwithstanding all that has occurred, we have still the inspiration of a great cause. We stand here to uphold not only the Throne, but the empire; to vindicate the industrial privileges of the working classes, and the reconstruction of our colonial system; to uphold the Church, no longer assailed by the masked batteries of appropriation clauses, but by unvizored foes; we stand here to maintain freedom of election and the majesty of Parliament, against the Jacobin manœuvres of the Lancashire clubs. These are stakes not lightly to be lost. At any rate, I would sooner my tongue were palsied before I counselled the people of England to lower their tone. Yes, I would sooner quit this House for ever than say to the people of England that they overrated their position. I leave these delicate intimations to the fervent patriotism of the Gentlemen of the new school. For my part, I denounce their politics, and I defy their predictions; but I do so because I have faith in the people of England, their genius, and their destiny.

The Amendment having been read by Mr. SPEAKER,

MR. H. GRATTAN rose and said, that he had an Amendment, to propose which, as it related to a paragraph preceding that upon which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Disraeli) had just moved an Amendment, would require to be put first. The Amendment he intended to propose referred to the paragraph relating to Ireland—which he regarded as an insult to the people of that country. The hon. Gentleman who had just spoken had talked of mock mediations abroad; but he forgot to allude to the mock insurrections at home. The insurrection in Ireland—which was alluded to so gravely in Her Majesty's Speech—was a mere mock insurrection. There was no evidence laid before them against the persons who had been apprehended under the Act suspending the Habeas Corpus; and he objected to the proposed continuance of that suspension. With respect to that passage in the Speech relating to the Irish Poor Law, it could not be acceded to by any Irish Member who wished well to his country. There was no use in appointing a Committee to inquire into the law—it ought to be entirely altered. Those laws had been condemned by resolutions passed at county meetings summoned by the high sheriffs of those counties, as having signally failed in their operation. Where was the use of further Parliamentary inquiring respecting them? Action, not inquiry, was wanted. Already they had had numerous Committees and reports, but all ended in nothing. The Devon Commission had received abundance of evidence on the subject, but the Government had not proceeded on it. It was not therefore the means, but the will that was wanting to change the character of those laws and render them more efficient. This country, he admitted, stood in a proud position, but it was because under a free constitution she upheld and enjoyed popular institutions; but the constitution in Ireland was violated, and her institutions were neglected or inoperative. Surely the Government ought not to be so inert on the subject of that now vital question, the poor-law, as to wait until every landed proprietor in Ireland was ruined, or until half the population emigrated. Under the present system, the man who cleared his estate and gave no employment obtained the reward, while those landlords who did their duty suffered the penalty. The law which applied to England might not apply to Ireland, and the law which applied to the east of Ireland might not apply to the west. There were many important facts connected with its operation which a Committee would not inform them of. It might elicit details already known, but would not tell them of the ruin which the poor-laws had caused to several deserving landed proprietors. The poor-law, he maintained, was demoralising the people. There was not a virtuous woman or an honest man would enter the workhouses if they could help it, because they were destroying the character and conduct of those who entered there. In those unions where the gentry and guardians undertook to support their own poor, and sent the Government officer away, the people got employment and relief, by voluntary though severe taxation. The evil did not stop there, for the people were dying in the ditches at the rate of twenty, and thirty, and fifty a week, and buried without coffin or shroud; and this not merely in the west and south, but in other parts of Ireland. Their evil effects were even beginning to be felt in the north. Not only were the rents vanishing, but with the rents the best of the tenantry. They were going to America, not only in grief at being forced from their own country, but with the seeds of revenge in their bosoms, which had been already displayed in the hope, openly expressed by some of them, that their sons might return at a future day with rifles on their shoulders. It was the duty of the Government to allay that feeling and prevent the danger it might hereafter create, by a timely alteration of those laws which were the immediate cause of the evil. England was never so popular on the Continent as at this moment; but her conduct to Ireland would certainly not make her more so. Her suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act would neither make her more popular abroad, nor add strength or honour to her Throne at home. They might talk of insurrection; but where was it? Was there a single paper before the House to prove its existence? It was notorious that men cried aloud in the streets for insurrection, but could not succeed. The very day that cannons were loaded, gates barricadoed, and the Bank secured with sand bags, in expectation of an insurrection, the city of Dublin was never more tranquil, nor its inhabitants less disposed to revolt. The Government, unfortunately, followed the advice of men who knew nothing of the case or real condition of Ireland. Men were arrested, not because they were traitors to the Queen, but because they were hostile to the policy of the Government. Men in America now complained of that. They complained of not being treated as freemen, and demanded the restoration of Irish nationality, and because they did so they were followed by spies, and in self-defence obliged to fly their country. It was only to be compared to the scenes described in the Castlereagh correspondence, from which it appeared that in 1798 men were taken up upon the particular knowledge of the Lord Lieutenant through his agents. So in Ireland lately men were arrested under the Habeas Corpus Act, without a particle of evidence against them; for some were discharged, and some let out on bail. The Lord Lieutenant was forced to do what he was unwilling to do; and the errors committed were not those of his head or heart, but of bad Downing-street advisers. The landed proprietors of Ireland were being deprived of their properties, and now it appeared they must lose their reputation. He, for one, would never tolerate the charge that Irishmen were disaffected; and he hoped those Roman Catholic Members who had been termed the "baptised spaniels of the Treasury bench," would not submit to the imputation. The hon. Member who had just sat down said, he wished Englishmen not to lower their tone. He, too (Mr. Grattan), wished Irishmen not to lower their tone, but to demand their liberty. The Lord Lieutenant was now allowed to do as the autocrat of Russia, and to commit to prison, without a particle of evidence of guilt. They would be a miserable set of men indeed if they submitted to that. He would therefore move the omission of the thirteenth paragraph of the Speech, because liberty not license should prevail, and, above all, in a country that been so long wronged. The hon. Gentleman, recurring again to the poor-laws, pointed out the parts of it which particularly required change. He wished for smaller areas of taxation, but not town lands: he wished for the repeal of the quarter-acre clause; for the inhumanity of compelling a man to walk twenty miles for relief, or refusing it because he had a quarter of an acre of land, was most to be condemned. It was painful to be obliged to blame men who, he believed, had at heart the interests of their country; but the effect of these laws was such that he felt compelled to throw the blame on those who had the power to alter them. The want of classification of the paupers in workhouses was absolutely demoralising the women, and the food was such as to destroy the character for strength of the ablebodied men. Those who could were leaving the country without paying a shilling of rent; and to such an extent was this taking place, that, between emigration and the poor-laws, Mayo, Kerry, and part of Cork, might shortly be struck out of the map of Ireland. In some parts of Ireland a few occupiers only were left, and they were made to pay the penalty for the absentee proprietors. What he complained of was, that the ministerial intentions as to the Irish Poor Law had not been clearly stated. Surely they did not mean to exterminate the people; and yet such was the effect of their measures, and such it must be, without an absentee tax. It was said all the people wanted was employment; but if the lands were cleared there would neither be employment nor persons to be employed. He denied that there was, or could be, or ought to be, amity between England and Ireland so long as the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, and an army of spies and informers was let loose on the country. Still he doubted not that if the Queen visited Ireland, the loyalty and gallantry of the people would give Her a hearty welcome. They wanted not separation, but justice; they wanted resident proprietors, and not whole estates left destitute. If things were allowed to continue in their present state, they would not be able to enlist a thousand soldiers in the west of Ireland. Any man's loyalty would be destroyed by such treatment as that to which the Irish had been subjected. He appealed to Ministers' sense of justice, and their humanity, to omit the paragraph he had alluded to. He contended that Mr. O'Brien, when in a state of excitement, had committed many imprudent, but not disloyal acts. When he found himself liable to be arrested as a felon, he had fled; but there was no insurrection; he could not prevent the people following and protecting him. The moment an officer said he had not a warrant against Mr. O'Brien, he was allowed to go on in the performance of his duty. He wished to know why he (Mr. O'Brien) was prosecuted, when Mr. O'Connell was allowed to assemble 500,000 men on the hill of Tara? He meant to move for a return of the expense incurred in sending over soldiers to put down that *quasi* rebellion; or he would advise the hon. Member for the West Riding to move it along with his financial resolutions. The publication of such a return would make the country laugh. If things went on the way they were progressing, the difficulty of one Minister would become the impossibility of another. Not a ray of hope had been held out to Ireland in the speeches of the Ministerial supporters. Though he stood there a free man, yet he felt that he spoke like the ancient Greek, placed, when captive, with a rope about his neck, to be drawn tight when he ended his discourse—so with him, the moment he returned to his country, he was liable to be thrown into prison as a suspected person. He entreated the Government not to sully their glory by oppressing Ireland, as they had done on former occasions. They might ask France or America if this country was safe in pursuing such a course; and let them beware of sowing the seeds of sedition in Ireland by expatriating her inhabitants, and thus raising the cry of separation. The Irish emigrants to America would all be advocates of separation. Let them recollect how the former Irish rebellion had commenced. By aid of the speeches of Lord Clare, and the efforts of Wolfe Tone, the French Directory had been induced to send their expedition to Ireland; and who could say that the same might not take place from America? Allusion had been made to the system of pensioning the Roman Catholic clergy. Let not the Government suppose that the clergy were to be gained by such means. He (Mr. Grattan) would oppose such a plan. Having bullied the Protestants and beggared the Catholics, they were about to buy the clergy. They might depend upon it they would never succeed. With these views, he should move the omission from the paragraph relating to Ireland of all the words after "insurrection in Ireland," and the substitution of the following words:—

> "That the disturbances in Ireland have not been renewed, but a feeling of discontent, augmented by the distresses of the people, still exists, which it will be our duty to watch, and as speedily as possible to remedy."

Mr. JOHN O'CONNELL said, he rose to second the Amendment of his hon. Friend. When Irish Members addressed themselves exclusively to Irish questions, they were often met with the taunting assurance that they were interested in the external as well as in the internal affairs of this great empire. But he had never received any consolation from such assurance; for he found that their representations as to their own country were without any weight or authority in that House. He would leave the foreign policy of Ministers to be settled between them and the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire; it was a pretty quarrel as it stood; he would only observe that the Government seemed to have adopted doctrines and principles in some part of their foreign policy which it would be well for them to inculcate in their policy towards Ireland. In dealing with the affairs of Sicily they had put forward the doctrine, in which he most entirely concurred, that a country, while continuing bound to a superior country by the golden link of the Crown, had the right to manage its own affairs by its own Parliament. Why had they not applied that principle to the case of Ireland, and why did they now make a pretext of the wretched, partial, and miserable outbreak of July last for obtaining powers to be directed, not against an insurrection, which they themselves confessed did not exist, but against legitimate and constitutional liberty in Ireland—against that principle which they had themselves asserted in the case of the Sicilians as against the Parliament of Naples? It would appear that they had put forward, in other countries, principles inconsistent with their love of order and their support of constitutional authority in this country. The secret mission of Lord Minto was not yet forgotten. If the tree might be judged by its fruits, it yet remained to be proved that the sad occurrences in Rome, the assassinations, outrages, and violence that reigned there now, had not been encouraged by the coquetting which the secret envoy of Great Britain had had with the parties foremost in that insurrection. Lord Minto in Rome had encouraged the rioters there—those who had shown the first symptoms of setting the Pope's authority at nought. Lord Minto had entertained at his own table Sterbini and the men now connected with the hideous outrages of that unfortunate insurrection. It would be for Ministers to clear themselves, and prove that they were not responsible for those outrages, by the kind of authority and encouragement which the secret envoy of this country had given to those parties in Rome. And yet not one word was there in the Royal Speech to express the slightest sympathy for the Pope, who had been driven from his throne by a band of assassins, the vilest and meanest of mankind; and this while the rest of Europe was nearly unanimous in reprobating the crime and the criminals, and proffering their aid to reseat him on that throne, and replace him again over that ungrateful people upon whom he had showered so many and such signal benefits. He had no fault to find with the tone and temper of the speeches of the Mover and Seconder of the Address; in fact, the noble Mover had made out a case against the Ministry whom he had risen to support. He had confessed that there was a most entire and perfect lull in Ireland; notwithstanding that, he advocated the continuance of those extraordinary powers which found their precedent under the most tyrannical governments of former times, because they happened to have confidence in the present Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. That was a most unconstitutional doctrine, to deprive a people of their rights because they had confidence in a single individual, and thus to place the liberties of a whole nation in the keeping of one man. A dictator was a monster unknown to the British constitution; and there was no pretext in the Royal Speech for thus outraging the feelings of the Irish people. He trusted, therefore, that Ministers would pay this much respect to the House, if not to the people of Ireland, of showing the grounds of the statement put forth that the spirit of disaffection still existed in that country, and that there was a necessity for renewing that unconstitutional measure, the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. To this measure, whenever it should be introduced, and to every stage of it he, for one, should offer his most determined and unabated opposition. He cared not though he should be termed factious; he should never consider that to be factious which he did in defence of his country when she was unjustly assailed. As to the poor-law, it was a measure that ought never to have been forced upon Ireland. It tended entirely to destroy that feeling of independence and self-reliance which was essential to the regeneration of the country. Even in this country the law had totally failed, as had been confessed by the preamble of every succeeding measure on the subject. He complained that the Government had brought forward no proposal of relief. No modification of the poor-laws would afford that relief. He objected entirely to the imposition of a poor-law in Ireland; but if it was to be imposed, let it bear rather upon the absentee than upon the resident landlord. The Government preached much about the necessity of self-dependence and exertion in the people of Ireland; but they forgot that the only stimulus to those virtues—a feeling of security in the fruits of labour—was wanting in that country. So long as there was that absence of security, so long would the people be idle. The Government seemed alive to the fact, that a feeling of security must form the basis of all industrial operations in Ireland. By the introduction of the Landlord and Tenant Bills, Ireland might yet be saved; although, certainly, not by the introduction of any system of poor-laws; for all the modifications introduced into them had failed to arrest the influx of pauperism into this country. Since the Union, Ireland's fortunes had been gradually declining; but still peace and prosperity might be secured to her. He repudiated the idea of endowing the Catholic clergy. The Catholic clergy would not accept any endowment. They well knew that their efficiency depended upon that affectionate intercourse between them and their flocks, that feeling of mutual co-operation and aid, which had hitherto prevailed. The revenue of the Protestant Church, saving, of course, existing interests, ought to be applied to the support of the poor; and, moreover, he was satisfied that this would be ultimately the application of this property. Ireland was without manufactures, and for that reason her people were wholly dependent on the land for their means of subsistence. Hence arose the life-and-death competition for land, a struggle which compelled the landlord to let his land at a rack rent. They had asked to be made secure in the results of their toil, and they were refused. They were told that they were an idle race; whereas nothing could exceed the industry of the people of Ireland, provided they were allowed to gather what they planted. The Irish people were forced to emigrate from their native shores. England drove them to America, where they were welcomed, and where they became incorporated in that hostile force which was destined probably to be arrayed at some future day against her. Let the House arrest its progress. Forty-eight years had Ireland been subject to the Legislative Union, and every year had witnessed a further degree of degradation and misery. If she were left to her own resources, she might yet recover and enable the Government to disband those armies by which alone she was now subdued. Before he concluded he begged to thank the hon. Seconder of the Address for the kind words he had uttered towards his country: they were grateful to his better feelings. He entreated that hon. Member and others, who were as independent of party ties as he was, to give their assistance against the wanton infliction and injury the Government was about to offer to his unhappy country by the adoption of measures of coercion.

The Question and Amendment having been put from the chair,

MR. W. FAGAN requested the attention of the House for a few minutes whilst he touched upon three points in the Speech from the Throne relative to Ireland. The Speech declared, that in certain parts of that country great distress prevailed, in consequence of the failure of the potato crop. If he were to form any judgment of the intentions of the Government from that paragraph, he should premise that Ministers were about to come down to Parliament and to ask for some relief for the suffering people; and though he was one who preferred that Ireland should struggle through her difficulties by herself—yet knowing as he did the state of penury that existed throughout the poor-law unions there, and that even *20s.* in the pound did not suffice for the relief of the distress, he would not refuse such assistance if it were offered. But the distress was not partial in Ireland — it existed throughout the length and breadth of the whole land. And as a proof of it, the circulation there had decreased from 6,000,000*l.* to 4,000,000*l.* The distress was also increased by the practice of hoarding, which was very prevalent. The next topic in the Speech to which he should advert, was that which referred to the operation of the poor-laws in Ireland. He differed on this subject from his hon. Friend the Member for Limerick. He did think an inquiry into the working of the poor-laws in Ireland was requisite; and it would be inconsistent in those who last year called for this inquiry, to say it was not now wanted. The very fact that a difference of opinion existed on the subject was ground sufficient for an inquiry; and he could vouch for this fact, for he was at a meeting of Members in Dublin on the subject, when there were five different opinions expressed on the subject of the poor-laws. The hon. Member for Limerick was opposed to all poor-laws in Ireland. He (Mr. Fagan) was for still continuing the system, for making it more efficient for the protection of the poor, and also for making all the landlords of Ireland bear their fair share of the burden. The third topic to which he had to allude, bore special reference to the Amendment before the House. If he had been asked what ought to be said in the Royal Speech about Ireland, he should have replied, that some congratulation ought to have been expressed on the tranquil state of the country, and a recommendation added, that the people should be immediately restored to the possession of all their civil rights. The nation had always been told that agitation was the bane of Ireland, and that as soon as it ceased, the people should have justice done them. Now, he assumed that agitation had ceased in Ireland, and in order to do them justice, the Ministers of the Crown, instead of coming down to Parliament to ask for a fresh Coercion Bill against them, ought to propose some soothing measures. When it was proposed to take away the Habeas Corpus Act—a statute of which the English people were so justly proud—the Government ought at least to show the reasons for so doing. He again asserted that Ireland was tranquil in those parts he was acquainted with—so much so, that the people were disgusted with political feeling and agitation. He was at the same time free to admit that the noble Lord at the head of the Irish Government had used the powers entrusted to him with great moderation. But he could never give that nobleman his confidence so long as he upheld the jury packing system in Ireland. Irish Members had often been told by the Government that the agitation which prevailed in Ireland had prevented the introduction of remedial measures: that agitation had now ceased, and the Government had an opportunity of introducing any remedial measures with which they might be prepared. If the Government would handle the social evils of Ireland in a bold and masterly spirit, he could promise them the hearty support and assistance of the people of that country.

LORD J. RUSSELL: The hon. Gentleman the Member for Buckinghamshire (Mr. Disraeli), who spoke first in this debate after my noble Friend the Mover of the Address, and the Seconder, paid a tribute, which I think natural, to the noble Lord who long led that party with which he was connected, and whose loss he most justly deplored. Sir, I could not hear that tribute without remembering I, too, since the last Session of Parliament, have lost Friends with whom I was politically connected; and I must say that I think it is not only natural, but right, that such losses should not be passed over in silence in this House, because the loss of men of undoubted integrity, of high spirit, of great talent, and of indefatigable industry in the transaction of public business, are not private but national losses. Sir, in referring to the various topics which have been raised in this debate, I will state but briefly the remarks that I have to make with regard to Ireland, because there is no subject connected with that country which is not likely, in a short time, to form the subject of a separate discussion. With regard to the particular Amendment which the hon. Gentleman the Member for Meath has moved, relating to the powers of which the Government propose to ask the renewal, I will only call upon the House to defer its judgment until they hear the statement which my right hon. Friend shall make, founded upon the opinion, certainly, of the Lord Lieutenant; but that opinion, formed not only upon his own judgment and his own strict and sagacious observation of passing events, but likewise upon the testimony of those from whom he is accustomed to obtain information with regard to the state of the country. I will only say, further, that I hope this House will bear in mind, when they come to that discussion, how long a Government must pause, supposing no such power to exist, before it comes down to ask Parliament for such powers—what menaces, what agitation, what interruption of trade and commerce, what disturbance of the public peace, must occur; and that if the Suspension Act should expire, and agitation were again to begin, it would not be at the first moment of that agitation that Government could, with any hope of success, ask for a grant of such powers, but that they must wait until a course of events somewhat similar to that which took place before had again occurred in Ireland, to the great misfortune of that country. For these powers which we propose to ask are not powers against Ireland; on the contrary, they are powers for the protection of all the well-disposed—for the protection of the great majority of the country against those who would turn its present condition to purposes of disaffection and rebellion. Sir, with respect to another topic, I own I was somewhat surprised to hear from the hon. Gentlemen who moved and seconded this Amendment, that the Government ought to have come down and proposed at once its Bill for the amendment of the poor-law. I have been accustomed to hear continual reproaches that in our legislation for Ireland we do not consult those who represent that country, and who know the feelings, the wants, and the condition of that country; that we rely upon our own notions and English feelings, and do not listen to the opinions of those who are natives of Ireland, and so much better acquainted with the nature of the measures suited to that country. Now, that we propose that there should be a Committee in which we should be able to ascertain what Irish Members think of the operation of the poor-law, and to consult their experience before we bring a Bill into the House, we are told that we ought to have framed our Bill entirely upon our own notions; that we should not have listened to Irish Members, but acted independently of any such advice or information. It is obvious that if we had taken that course, we should have been liable to reproach, and I have no doubt we should have come under the censure of those who now blame us for taking the opposite course. We cannot say, either, that there is that unanimous opinion in Ireland as to the amendment of the poor-law that upon that opinion we could frame a Bill for the amendment of that law; because, according to the statement of the hon. Member for Cork, when a small portion of the representatives of Ireland met—I think only nine—as the hon. Gentleman says, there were among them five different opinions as to the amendment that ought to be made in the poor-law, so that if we had taken the opinion of one of those five, we should have had four to one of Irish opinions against the measure we should have proposed. With regard to what has been said as to other Irish measures, there were several Bills introduced last year, and which we mean again to submit to the consideration of the House; there is one with regard to that long-vexed question of landlord and tenant, which last year was before a Committee, and which we propose again to lay before the House; there is the question with regard to the franchise, with respect to which my right hon. Friend has a Bill already prepared; and there is the grand-jury system also; so that we are not liable, in fact, to the reproach of not having attended to any other subject with respect to Ireland but that of restraining the liberties of that country. I come now, Sir, to some of the questions raised by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Disraeli), and I think it will be as well that I should enter into them now, taking this Address as a whole, as speak merely to the question of the Amendment which has been moved. Now let me say, with regard to the hon. Gentleman, that I think he displayed very great ingenuity in the objections that he made to the Address proposed; he cavilled at one phrase, carped at another term, found fault with the title that had been given to a foreign sovereign, and in that way with very great ability kept the House from the consideration of the questions that were really before it; and he proceeded upon that to move an Amendment, which as I shall presently show is of a most extraordinary character. But the hon. Gentleman thought fit first of all to state to us what was the present state of our commercial legislation and policy, and how much we had gone astray in respect to it. In support of this opinion, he made some statistical observations, which I confess were unintelligible to me; he told us, that when a very large import of food was introduced from America, the American growers and importers had 5,000,000*l.* of profit in the transaction; and what does he wish to infer from that? I should have thought, upon that question, that even all protectionists as well as all free-traders would acknowledge, that when there is a great deficiency of food in this country, whether you have sliding-scale, fixed duty, or no duty at all, it should be your object in that emergency to collect as much food as possible; and that if there is a good price in this country, while the price in the country of production is low, the temptation of that profit is a reason why your wants should be supplied, and that you should rejoice that those wants should be supplied by so large an importation. That American growers and merchants should gain 5,000,000*l.* of profit in that transaction, provided we had the benefit of the food for the consumers in this country, is not a subject of lamentation with me. I only think that it is the natural result of commerce, and one which we are not by any means to deplore, but to take as the effect of all commercial transactions. For my part I never can enter into that notion which the hon. Gentleman seems to entertain, that every gain of the foreigner is the loss—a robbery—of the British people; that every time there is a large profit made by some foreign producer or merchant, we should deplore it as a national plunder. Upon the contrary, if commerce is carried on in a healthy state, there ought to be gain on both sides. We gain by the merchandise we send to America; America gains by furnishing us with the articles we want; and there is gain, again, by all those who are concerned in carrying the goods from one country to the other. So far from thinking this a subject upon which we should pour our lamentations, I should be glad to see that commerce still farther extended. I believe that the laws we have passed in the course of the last few years, so far from tending to impoverish the country, will tend to enrich it. I do not think that we have any reason to complain if those commercial transactions become more extended; but I do believe, with respect to the importation of corn, for instance, which is the great necessary of life for the people, that the people of England will be great gainers by not having the recurrence of those times of very high prices to which they were formerly subjected. The hon. Gentleman says that the law of 1842 was changed after an experience of three years; but in my opinion the laws were changed after an experience of thirty years. The corn law was enacted by Parliament in 1815; it was changed and modified into various shapes, but at last statesmen of different parties, and the majority of this House, came to the opinion that in no shape whatever would it be expedient to continue this law, and that it would be far better that the trade in food should be made entirely free. I was an advocate, for one, of the modifications of that law—for a fixed duty; and I believe that if that fixed duty had been enacted many years ago, it would have acted most beneficially for the country, and, at last, have gradually given way to the complete free trade that we now have. But Parliament having not chosen to adopt that mode, having chosen to set corn entirely free, I hope that no one will attempt—above all, I hope that no one will be successful—in renewing any duty upon that indispensable article of subsistence. The hon. Gentleman having stated his opinion upon this subject, which, if it meant anything, meant, as I conceive, a restoration of protective duties, then proceeded to enter into the question of our foreign relations. Now, all that is stated in the Queen's Speech, with regard to the foreign relations of this country, has been put in that Speech by the advice given to Her Majesty according to what is strictly the fact with regard to the transactions that had taken place; and all that my noble Friend (Lord H. Vane) calls upon this House to do, is to thank Her Majesty for informing them of those various transactions. There is throughout the Address no word of congratulation or of approbation of the transactions or of the policy pursued; on the contrary, those questions are entirely reserved, because Her Majesty is pleased to say in Her Speech, that when the public service will permit, the papers relating to these various transactions will be laid before Parliament. Now, it has been usual for the House of Commons, which does not take upon itself generally the initiative in these matters, at all events to wait for such communications; to press for such papers if they should think it necessary, or, having waited till these papers are produced, to found, if any Member should think it necessary to found upon them, some charge or some resolution with respect to the opinion of the House; and such appears to me to be the reasonable course with regard to these transactions. With respect to the state of manufactures, with respect to the state of the colonies or of agriculture, the hon. Gentleman may fairly call upon this House to express an opinion; but these foreign negotiations, as we know, are generally matters of a somewhat complicated character, leading to the exchange of notes, and assuming different phases in the course of the transactions; and it is unexampled for a Member to come forward on the first night of a Session, without the information, and without even asking for it, and to call upon the House to vote that Her Majesty's relations with foreign Powers are not such as to justify us in addressing Her Majesty in the language of congratulation. No congratulation is proposed, no congratulation has been asked; and this is merely saying that the House of Commons thinks proper to form its opinion without a knowledge of the negotiations that have taken place, without any insight into the transactions, and to say at once that they do not form matter of congratulation, which means saying at once that they form matter of condemnation. But when I heard the hon. Gentleman make his observations upon our foreign relations, it convinced me the more that he was wrong in asking the House to come to any such conclusions, because his observations convinced me that he was totally misinformed with regard to them. He seemed to suppose, for instance, that with regard to the war carried on between the King of Sardinia and the Emperor of Austria, we had proposed to impose our mediation without ever having been requested by the Emperor of Austria to mediate. Another statement I know has been made, and is current with the public, that mediation was proposed to us by Austria, and was refused by this country. Neither of those statements is at all correct. The real fact is, that the Emperor of Austria was pleased to send an Austrian statesman, a very distinguished man—a gentleman whom I have often had occasion to meet, and always had great pleasure in intercourse with him—he sent that statesman to this country with a proposal to this country to mediate between him and the King of Sardinia. We accepted that mediation; but with regard to the proposed basis of it we suggested that an alteration should be made by the Emperor. That statesman considered that we had accepted the mediation, but he demurred to the terms of our basis, and insisted that the terms proposed by the Emperor were those which ought to be the terms, and he returned to his own country. At a subsequent period a mediation was proposed to the Emperor of Austria, and under these circumstances: the King of Sardinia being much pressed in the field, determined to ask for the assistance of France; a correspondence took place between this country and the French Government, and the French Government at our request consented to put aside the question of beginning hostilities against Austria in Italy, and conjointly with us to propose terms of mediation to the two

Powers. The hon. Gentleman said, in another part of his speech, that he doubted whether this country ought to have acted with France—with the Governments which she has had since the Revolution of February. Sir, I feel no such doubts. I feel convinced that our acting in concert with France during the past year has been of great benefit to the peace of Europe. I feel convinced that if we had said at once "However moderate your propositions—however pacific the course that you propose to pursue, you have changed your monarchical Government into a republic, and therefore we will have nothing to say to your proposals,"—in the first place, such an answer would have excited a suspicion in France that, although we did not profess it, we meant to interfere with respect to her form of government; and I believe, in the next place, that being left to take her own line without concert and without advice, she would have been driven by the violent party in that country into hostilities by which the whole peace of Europe would have been compromised. I therefore differ entirely from the hon. Gentleman in thinking that we ought not to have had any concert with France upon these matters. Whether France has been wise in changing her form of government to a republic—whether it is true, as the hon. Gentleman says, that there are no republicans in France—that is a question upon which I do not choose to enter; it is a question for the French people alone. But what I know is, that although at the commencement of that revolution there were terms used in a circular of M. Lamartine's which certainly appeared to menace the peace of Europe, and though there was, as I thought, a great deal too much unintelligible jargon about "nationality," yet, with respect to M. Lamartine, with respect to General Cavaignac, and with respect to the present Government, I can say that we have had to deal with persons directing the foreign affairs of France since the revolution, who have listened fairly and candidly to all the representations we had to make to them, and who have stated fairly and honestly to us what they believed to be the interest and the policy of France; and we have had no reason whatever to complain, but, on the contrary, reason to rejoice that we had to deal with men of high honour and of consistent and unwavering integrity. But I am not sure that I am at all convincing the hon. Gentleman when I say that our concert with France has tended to the preservation of the peace of Europe, because, as far as I collect from the tenor of his speech, his inclination seemed to be that our object ought to be war, and that the fault he found with us was that we had not let war take its course. That was his view more especially with respect to Holstein. He said, "Your mediation has put a stop to hostilities, and what would have gone on very well has been arrested by your mediation." Why, what would have gone on? The King of Denmark would have resisted the power of the Germans; the Germans would have insisted that they had rights with respect to Schleswig, which has been long a favourite opinion in Germany; and France and Prussia would have taken their view of the matter. Those views not being counteracted by any pacific mediation, war must have been the result; and the complaint the hon. Gentleman makes is, that we did interpose when both the King of Denmark and the King of Prussia, and the Central Power at Frankfort wished us to mediate, and that we did not allow that war to get up, and to take its course in Europe, as he showed very clearly it might otherwise have done. Then there was another question, naturally, so far as we are concerned, of more serious import, because we have more actively interfered; I mean with regard to Naples and Sicily. It will be recollected by those who heard the statements that were made last year, that Lord Minto, after a very considerable time was spent in conferences, was requested by the King of Naples to propose to the Sicilians terms upon which they might consent again to return to their allegiance; after a very considerable time spent in conferences, Lord Minto, at the request of the King of Naples, went to Sicily and conveyed those terms to the Sicilians. The terms were not accepted by them. Lord Minto was of opinion that they might have been in prudence accepted by them; but the ground upon which they declined to accept was one on which it was not very easy to shake their determination. They said that in ancient times Sicily was a free country; that in 1812 the constitution had been reformed, and under the auspices of the British generally and with every proof of British sympathy, and that it was part of the terms of the constitution then agreed upon, that the Parliament was to decide with respect to the whole internal administration and with regard to the number of troops to be kept up in Sicily;

that no foreign troops of any kind, being other than Sicilians, except those admitted by treaty, should be allowed to come into Sicily. Moreover, there was an article in that constitution, that if the King of Sicily should ever reside in Naples he should name one of his sons, or one of his family at all events, to reign in Sicily, That constitution, after various changes, was put an end to the same year. In 1816 the British Government had declared, that though it gave no guarantee to the Sicilian constitution, it should take an interest in the welfare of Sicily, and consider it injurious to the British name if the welfare of Sicily should be less well provided for in future than it had been. The Sicilians insisted that that constitution should be in whole restored. When Lord Minto returned to Naples he found that the King would not consent to such terms ; and there was an end of that negotiation. It was undertaken by a British Minister at the desire of the King of the Two Sicilies, as he would be called in a formal diplomatic instrument; the two parties could not agree, and the negotiation fell to the ground. Whatever might be the case as to the justification which the British Government might make for any further interference, their decision was not to interpose any further than to give any friendly advice to the Sicilians in cases in which they might ask it. Accordingly, when some time after an expedition was prepared at Naples for the purpose of conquering Sicily, no obstacle was interposed to the sailing of that expedition. It has been said that a large British fleet was assembled at Naples for the purpose of preventing that expedition from sailing: that is totally an error, Sir W. Parker having taken the British fleet there on account of other questions in respect of which he thought he was entitled to ask reparation. But when that expedition reached Messina, there took place at the close of the siege of Messina events which appeared so horrible and so inhuman in the eyes of the French Admiral, that he determined to interfere. I need not say now what those circumstances were. There were atrocities, as I think, on both sides; the destruction of houses, of villages, and of unoffending peasants on the one side, the bombardment against a town which had ceased to resist on the other. The tearing of the limbs of the Swiss soldiers in the service of the King of Naples, and parading those limbs with savage exultation about the streets! It appeared to the French Admiral that it was impossible such a warfare could continue without an utter desolation of Sicily, and such alienation from the Neapolitan Government on the part of the Sicilians that no final terms of agreement could arise; he therefore determined to take upon himself to put a stop to the further progress of the Neapolitan armament. After he had so determined he communicated with Sir W. Parker. Sir W. Parker had a most difficult duty to perform; but taking all the circumstances into consideration, our former friendly relations with the Sicilians, the accounts he had received from the captain of one of Her Majesty's ships then at Messina, the atrocities he heard of, and that the French Admiral was about to act, and it was important at that juncture that the two nations should act in concert, his determination was to give orders similar to those which had been given by the French Admiral. I stated last Session that no orders had been given to stop the Neapolitan expedition, but that the Government reserved to itself to act in future as circumstances might dictate, and that I had perfect confidence in the discretion and judgment of Sir W. Parker. I remember the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Stamford expressing apparently, though not in words, a concurrence with that sentiment; and I have the same opinion still. He was not a man likely to be led away by passion; he had none of that revolutionary mania by which some persons might be misled in those circumstances: he was anxious for the honour of the British flag, and anxious for the cause of humanity; and he took that proceeding upon his own responsibility. The question, then, for the British Government was, whether they should entirely disavow Sir W. Parker, whether they should tell him that he had done wrong to interpose—or whether, on the other hand, an armistice having been established by the King of Naples, his general having *de facto* consented to an armistice—whether we should take advantage of existing circumstances to propose terms in which the Neapolitan Government and the Sicilian people could agree, and the Sicilian people again be induced to be the subjects of the King of Naples. The latter part was chosen, for which we are responsible. If it was right to allow the war to recommence, to separate the British fleet entirely from the course which was taken by the French Admiral, and to disavow Sir W. Parker, we have been wrong, and we have taken a course for which we deserve censure; but if, as I believe, it was the duty of the Government, with respect to two countries in which they took a great interest; with respect to the King of Naples, an ally of this country; with respect to the Sicilian people, with whom we had been long connected—to endeavour to frame terms upon which both parties should agree, then, I say, we are justified in the course that we have adopted. The hon. Member for Buckinghamshire seems to say that there is no negotiation, so well is he informed upon all these subjects on which he proposes to address the Crown; that it is a negotiation confined to England and France. Now, he is entirely mistaken in that. There have been terms stated by the Sicilians, and an answer received from Naples with respect to them, stating some of those terms as reasonable in themselves, and such as the King would be ready to consent to, and objecting to others, and leaving the matter as one to be treated in further negotiation. That further negotiation still continues. If it should end in our establishing permanent peace there, I think we shall have performed a duty, both to the Sovereign of Naples and the people of Sicily, and shall have rendered a service likewise to the cause of peace in Europe. If we are unable to procure such a result, all that we can do at present is to require that due notice be given when the armistice is to cease and war to be renewed. But my belief is that, after what has taken place, even if that war were to be renewed, it would not be renewed in the same spirit in which it was begun. My opinion is, that there would be in the first place such terms offered by the King of Naples and such orders given, that it is probable that war would not be conducted in so destructive, so savage, and so desolating a manner. But with regard to all these matters, although we do not ask for congratulation or for approbation, yet I must say that I am glad to find that during a year of great peril to the peace of Europe, the services of England have been of use to stay the ravages of war and to mitigate hostilities. If the hon. Gentleman would have had but the patience to wait, he would have had the papers which will be, in no very long time, laid before Parliament, and it would then have been open to him to say that there was no reason to congratulate the country. But I believe that, standing secure ourselves, having no such convulsions as other nations have been exposed to, I believe it was befitting this country, when she was asked, and in other cases, to offer her good offices for the purpose of removing quarrels, of which very often the ground is not very considerable, but which if once left to the arbitrament of war may tend to as long and as bloody contests as if the grounds of difference had been wider and more serious. With respect to the next question to which the hon. Gentleman referred, namely, the expense of our military establishments, I think he seemed naturally enough to be hardly better informed on it than he is as to the state of our foreign affairs. He seemed to suppose that we had yielded to representations which had appeared in a public letter addressed to the Financial Association of Liverpool by the hon. Member for the West Riding. Now, Sir, my opinion is entirely contrary to that. I think whatever reductions or augmentations you might make, to take the year 1835, or any other fixed year for some time past, and to say you will square your estimates and fix your establishments according to the expenditure of that year, would be, with great deference to the hon. Gentleman, an extremely irrational course for any Government to pursue. In the first place, it is obvious that your requirements might be very different. In the next place, any one who will look at the finance accounts, or the votes of the year, will see that there have been some 4,000,000*l.* or 5,000,000*l.* added to our expenditure on grounds which have nothing to do with any increase to our armaments. Therefore, if you take off 10,000,000*l.*, instead of having the same establishments you had in 1835, you would have smaller establishments than in that year. Then, if you take 1835 as the standard, you must be sure that the establishments were then fixed exactly according to the exigencies of the country; and that is a fact I am not so certain of. I need not touch upon that point, because I decline to debate the subject altogether; but it must be assumed by the hon. Gentleman, that in 1835 there was proposed the precise estimate which ought to have been made. In the next place, our position, and what we have to furnish, is very much altered and increased since 1835. In one colony we have acquired since 1835, there were last year 1,800 of the infantry of the line. So that if you were to take your rule from 1835 you would have certain garrisons diminished below that year, in order to supply others which have since been acquired. Persons engaged in manufactures, commerce, or farming never would adopt such a principle. Suppose a man should say, "I find that while my expenditure in factories is 30,000*l.* a year now, I never paid more in 1835 than 20,000*l.*;" yet he might find that he had two or three new factories since that time; or that he had conducted the business of two or three additional farms to what he did in 1835. Obviously, he would say, "That is the cause of my increased expenditure. This accounts at least for part of it. I cannot conduct five or six establishments at the same rate I could three or four." That would be the course I am sure any man would pursue in private life; and I cannot think it wise for a Government, or Parliament, to pursue a different course, and say we shall have no reference to the service to be performed and the garrisons to be maintained; because we find in one particular year a certain number of millions sufficient for the public service, therefore exactly the same sum must be sufficient for the present year. But while I disagree with the hon. Gentleman, and though I think there is a phrase in his letter which rather shows the wrong test he would apply to this matter, for he says that 10,000,000*l.* is a good sum founded on the experience of former years for the purpose of agitation, he shows clearly that he has formed his estimate not upon what the public exigencies require, but what he thinks likely to raise the most popular cry. At the same time, when we had to consider the question of our establishments, I think it was obvious we could not persevere in the course we found ourselves bound to take last year. Last year there was a sudden and formidable convulsion in various parts of Europe, and no man could say what might be the issue of that convulsion. We did not think we should be justified, in those circumstances, in proposing to diminish our expenditure. We asked for the same number of men for the Navy and the Army we had asked at the commencement of the Session, although we had not the ways and means sufficient for that purpose. This House supported us in that course. They declared, by large majorities, that it was not expedient to reduce our military establishments. But when we had again to consider the question of estimates exceeding the amount of our revenue, it was our duty, I think, to come to one of two conclusions—either to reduce those estimates to bring them within the amount of revenue, or, on the other hand, to attempt to raise the revenue to the amount of our expenditure. It was not fitting to go on another year increasing the public debt of the country without the prospect of equalising the expenditure. Now, the first course was evidently the best, supposing it was justifiable and practicable. We had to consider, first, whether there were not many reforms that might be made, many retrenchments that might be effected, without impairing the number or efficiency of our military establishments. The report of the Committee which sat last year upon our naval and military expenditure—which was no proposition of mine—the House is indebted for its appointment to the hon. Member for Montrose—the report of that Committee stated, that with regard to the Navy at least there might be many useful reforms without impairing its efficiency. This was one source of economy. But that would not enable us to bring the revenue within the limits I have stated. We had therefore to consider whether our effective force could be reduced. Now, in considering that subject we had to remember that since we had been in office we had added 3,000 men to the number voted for the Navy, and 5,000 to the number voted for the artillery. In considering these subjects, then, we come to the conclusion, that in the present state of Europe, and having made these additions to our naval and military force, we might now safely make some reductions—reductions which would give us a considerable amount of saving, without, in our opinion, impairing our force below that which was necessary for the efficiency of the public service, and necessary for the defence of our various colonies. Whether we have done wisely in that respect, whether the reductions we propose to make come within the principles I have stated—whether we have carried them too far, or have not gone far enough, will be proper questions for this House to consider when the estimates come before them, and when my right hon. Friends charged with the respective departments shall state their views of the exigency of the public service, and of the amount of force required. But these reductions have been considered on the principle of what is wanted and what can be spared from the service for the present year, and they have not been taken with reference to any particular past year, or on the plan of squaring the expenditure with that year. Sir, when we say that the aspect of public affairs enables us to make these reductions, I should say that I consider, and I agree with the hon. Gentleman who has seconded the Address in thinking that France is the most valuable friend and the most formidable foe with whom we could have to deal. For many years past, and under different Governments, it has seemed to be the object of France to increase her military armaments, and more especially to increase the strength of her naval force—a navy not commensurate with her commerce — not required, be it observed, to protect the colonies or the trade of France, but obviously a navy to be used in case of war. Sir, my opinion was and is, and I so stated it last year, that if France is to have very great armaments at sea, and if we allow her to go on increasing her naval strength without any proportionate increase of our own, then that in the event of any trifling difference, which if the power of the two nations seemed equal would be easily adjusted, that difference might easily lead to war between the two countries, if the war party in France could point to England as a weaker Power, inferior in point of force. But, Sir, I am happy to find that the conduct of the Government of France is to curtail and restrict their naval and military strength, and not to continue the enlargement and increase of their armaments. This is one reason why we have considered it safe to recommend no greater estimates than we propose for the present year; and I trust that, in spite of the denunciations of the proposed Amendment, the various States of Europe, however they may settle their internal affairs, will, in the progress of negotiation and the process of time, come to the conclusion that war must be injurious to all the nations of Europe, and that there can be no sufficient cause why one State should be an aggressor against another. If such pacific sentiments should fortunately prevail, and if each Power should be left to make arrangements for its own internal constitution and good government, then I would say that the reductions of the present year may be followed in future years, and that while it would be exceedingly unwise and imprudent to make any sudden and great reductions at once, still that gradual reductions, made, in the language of the Speech from the Throne, with a "wise economy," may be a policy which we may be able to pursue, and which it will be the interest of every country in the world to follow also. Now, Sir, I do not contend that there is not cause of anxiety in the present state of Europe. I am far from thinking that the revolutions which took place last year have run their course, and that every nation in which they occurred can now be said to be in a state of solid security. I rejoice as much as any man that the ancient empire of Austria, our old ally, is recovering her splendour, and is showing her strength in such a conspicuous manner. Still I cannot forget that there are many questions not yet settled with regard to the internal institutions of Prussia—that the question of the formation of what the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Disraeli) has called an empire without an emperor, is still in debate—and that we cannot be sure what the ultimate result of these events will be. It is also true that there may have been during last year an excess of apprehension, caused by the great events that were taking place, and by the rising up of some wild theories pretending to found the happiness of the State and of mankind on visionary and unsound speculations, on which the happiness of no country or people can ever be founded. We have seen these opinions prevail in many countries to a considerable extent, and no one can say that events may not at an unforeseen moment take an unfortunate turn for the peace and tranquillity of Europe. But still the time that has elapsed since the breaking out of the revolution of February has made men consider both what is the value of real liberty, and what is the value of peace and order, as set against political theories, and how much may and ought to be sacrificed of what may be considered theoretical perfection, in order to obtain the advantage of that internal peace in which all reforms can alone be deliberately discussed, and gradually take their place in the settled institutions of the country. No one can deny that amid many misfortunes and mistakes the foundations of the great principles which we revere have been prepared, and that those principles are likely to be permanent among the nations of Europe. I trust that the event may ultimately be equal to the expectations of the most sanguine. But in the mean time I do appeal against this proposed Amendment, not by any carping at any particular terms, or going through a minute defence of every act of the Government, but appealing generally to what has been happening around us, and what is the present state of Europe, seeing that we have gone through a commercial convulsion, arising chiefly from a wild spirit of speculation. I ask is our commerce shaken to the dust, or is it true that it is again reviving, that it is assuming a healthful condition, and that it is taking its usual course, indicative of restored prosperity? We have gone through what, with every deference to the hon. Member for Meath, I must consider an insurrection in Ireland. That country has been restored to tranquillity—has it been by any sanguinary measures? Has it been by arraying one class against another? Has it been by fixing upon Ireland a permanent state of civil war, which would have been worse than a transitory insurrection? Sir, I reply that it has not; and a large share of the credit is due to my noble Friend the Viceroy of that country for his vigour and energy, and for those rarer qualities of judgment, temper, and forbearance. He has shown himself averse from the first to setting class against class, or inflicting sanguinary punishments upon the guilty. I say again that this country has been menaced by those who, like some in other countries, would for the sake of plunder have disturbed the whole order of society. Have they not been defeated in their machinations by the power of the law alone, and at the same time dealt with by as fair and as merciful a procedure as is consistent with the constitution of this country? Sir, during the past year Europe has been convulsed with revolution. Without going into the details of foreign commotion, I will ask whether this country has been involved in hostilities, or in danger of hostilities? Has not peace with Europe been preserved by this country; and with respect to other Powers, have we not shown a desire to take a course much more honourable to us than would have been a desire to mix in the fray, and excite other Powers to conflict and war? Sir, if I say these things with truth, and admitting, as I do, that with respect to the greater portion of them, the first honour, after Divine Providence, is to be given to the wisdom, the prudence, and energy of this mighty people; yet, if such has been the result, the Government which has been at the head of affairs during such a period at least deserve that they should not be condemned on the first night of the Session.

Mr. ROCHE said, that in considering the subject before the House, he would confine himself exclusively to the state of Ireland. He certainly had heard with great pain the three paragraphs in the Speech from the Throne, in which reference had been made to Ireland; and that pain was heightened by the manner in which the question of Ireland had been alluded to by the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) who had just sat down. The noble Lord, in arguing for the necessity of passing these Coercion Bills on the ground that without them the law in Ireland could not take its course, and that herein consisted the defence of the renewal of so invidious a measure, was for placing Ireland with regard to coercion in the same position as England had been placed with regard to the excise. That was introduced and sanctioned by Parliament as a temporary expedient, but resulted in a permanent Act, imposing a tax of 20,000,000*l.* per annum on the country. Foremost among the questions connected with Ireland should be placed the poor-law; and with regard to that law he might say that there was, in his opinion, a great deal of delusion prevailing in reference to it, not only in this country but in Ireland. Much stress was laid on the importance of adopting a more limited area of taxation in this country; but he could not perceive how such a plan could be adopted without at the same time greatly facilitating the system now so prevalent, of exterminating the people. He would take the case of two adjoining townlands, A and B. The townland A had a great number of paupers upon it, while the entire population on townland B had been exterminated some ten or fifteen years ago, and it had been since cultivated by labourers hired from townland A. In this case, the effect of a townland rating would be, that the paupers on townland A would eat up the whole property, and, in the end, townland B would have to support them. He was convinced that if they adopted such an alteration, the extermination in Ireland would be trebled, until the whole of the pauper population would be got rid of and transported beyond the seas. He was also satisfied that they could not carry out a stringent law of settlement in Ireland. Even in this country it would be impracticable, but in Ireland the effect would be to create endless litigation between the different boards of guardians; and he had no doubt but that at least 6*d.* in the pound would be added to every rate for legal expenses. As to the proposition of the hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. Poulett Scrope), he could not see what definition was intended to be assigned to the term "labour" in it; but of one thing he was sure, and that was, that the effect of such a measure, if carried out, would be to make every labourer a sort of white slave. It would also have the effect of counteracting the efforts that were now being made to improve the condition of the agricultural classes, as in place of every one idle workman at present, they would have five or six idle men, as soon as they became certain that if they were discharged from their employment the rates would be increased. What he wished to impress upon the House was, that they could not regenerate Ireland—that they could not make a poor country rich, or an idle country prosperous, by means of a poor-law. If they wanted to regenerate Ireland, they should develop her resources. He did not agree with those who thought that if the resources of the country were developed, there would be no surplus population in Ireland; and he was therefore an advocate for a proper system of colonisation. He would say, employ the people at home, if possible; but, if not, then let them emigrate. The hon. Member for Nottingham (Mr. Feargus O'Connor) and others, thought that by subdividing the land all the people could be employed. He believed the hon. Member for Nottingham was of opinion that a family could live on one acre of land; but even allowing eight acres to each family, in the first instance, were they prepared to subdivide that proportion again and again, according as the families increased? They should consider that Ireland was a purely agricultural country, and had suffered more than any other country by the free-trade measures that had been adopted. He had been long an advocate for free trade, and he did not now wish to say anything against the system; but this he would say, that if the injury to Ireland had been so much greater than the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth had anticipated, they had a right to more relief than they had as yet received. He believed, that before effecting any permanent good for Ireland, they should settle the question of tenure; and he could not but express his regret that in the small portion of the noble Lord's speech which he had devoted to Ireland, he had made no allusion to that vital question. They should also reduce taxation. The House was perhaps not aware that the grand-jury tax alone amounted to a million and a quarter; and he believed there never was a tax in any country so misapplied, or for which so little value was given in proportion to the money spent. He did not believe that there was a system on the face of the earth under which so much jobbing was perpetrated as the Irish grand-jury system. The House would scarcely believe the fact, that, if properly applied, the Irish grand-jury tax would be sufficient to maintain the whole poor of the country in ordinary times, when no famine prevailed. Another great grievance was the Irish Church establishment. The fisheries and the mineral resources of the country ought also to be developed; and whatever the conduct of Irish Members might have been formerly with regard to a measure alluded to by the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire, there could be no reason whatever, at the present period of distress for refusing to encourage railways in that country. He asked those who had enrolled themselves in Manchester, for what he might call the better observance of economy and retrenchment, to look at the state of Ireland, and say whether she was not now as ruinous to their pockets as she was disgraceful to their characters as men and as Christians? Let them treat Ireland with justice, and they would find that she would prove their strength in time of war, and their best customer in time of peace.

Mr. HERBERT said, that after the speech of the noble Lord at the head of Her Majesty's Government, it would be impossible for him to do otherwise than vote for the Amendment of the hon. Member for Meath. The declaration of the noble Lord that evening, that Government were not prepared to apply any remedy to the abuses of the present Irish Poor Law, did materially aggravate the distress of all classes in that country. The reason which the noble Lord had given for this inaction was, he thought, of no weight whatever. If he waited till the Irish Members were agreed among themselves, that was tantamount to saying that there should be no legislation at all upon the subject. But that appeared to him to be only an additional reason why Her Majesty's Government should have come forward with a distinct proposition of their own upon the subject.

Mr. HUME said, he was anxious to express his feelings on the topics alluded to in Her Majesty's Speech; but at that hour of the night he thought it would be better to move the adjournment of the House. If a division was to take place, he would take that opportunity of stating his opinions, not so much on what was contained as on what was omitted in the Speech. He thought that at a time when the public were in expectation of the announcement of most important measures of relief, the Government should have been prepared to state how they were about to meet those expectations. On looking to the Speech, he could not find that any portion of the recommendations of the popular Members on that most important subject—the inequality and burdens of taxation—had been attended to. He proposed last year that the income-tax should only be continued for one year, in order that a revision of our taxation should be gone into; but he was then told that matters were not ripe for such a change, but that Her Majesty's Government would prepare some measure during the recess. And now, in the whole course of the noble Lord's address, there was not the slightest allusion to the subject. The noble Lord had indeed claimed credit for the reduction of the national establishments during the coming year, though he doubted if after all it would extend so far as his own proposal last year, to reduce the Army by 13,000 men. But had the noble Lord said one word as to the reduction of the burdens of the people. No hope was held out to the people that the subject should be taken into consideration at all. He complained of that as a great omission. The hon. Member for Buckinghamshire (Mr. Disraeli) never spoke but to interest and instruct the House; but the greatest portion of his speech was devoted to the foreign policy of the country, into which he (Mr. Hume) did not feel disposed to follow him. He would rather put in a claim on the part of the people of England; for he thought while the attention of Her Majesty's Ministers was directed to the affairs of other States, they were neglecting the interests of the country at home. He asked the Government whether they intended to meet the wishes of the people, and have an investigation into the state of the taxation of the country? The noble Lord had taken great credit to the Government for their proposed reductions. But what did they amount to? He proposed to bring back the establishments for the coming year to what they had been during the year before last, but he had not said one word of reducing them so as to relieve the people from the great pressure of taxation. For his part, he did not think the House would be warranted any longer in passing estimates which exceeded the income of the country. The hon. Member for Buckinghamshire had launched out at large into the question of reciprocity. He (Mr. Hume) was glad to hear protection was dead, and that there would be no foolish attempts to revive it, and that henceforth reciprocity was to be the rule. But he would have preferred hearing the hon. Member say whether he was prepared to maintain the present amount of taxation at a time when the effect of the corn laws had lowered prices, and caused a reduction in the profits of the farmer. He wished those who were called the farmer's friends would tell him what relief they proposed to give the farmer, or in what way he was to be protected now that he was exposed to competition from the whole world. If some measures were not taken in that direction, they would soon have agricultural discontent along with the discontent of the commercial classes. [*Cheers from the Opposition.*] Then, why did not those Gentlemen who cheered, stand up and ask for relief to the farmer, for it was vain for them to think of restoring artificial protection? The hon. Member for Buckinghamshire protested against any further concessions to the popular power of the country. He (Mr. Hume), with reference to that protest, wished to ask Her Majesty's Ministers whether they intended to take their stand upon the present state of popular representation, and to refuse all concession on the subject? If they did so, they would continue that agitation which had made the name of Chartist odious to the country. Yes, and very properly so; but let the House recollect that though the conduct of the Chartists had deserved odium, the principles for which they contended were entitled to the support of every one who regarded the principles of the constitution. Could the Government suppose that Englishmen, who had been accustomed to stand at the head of popular representation, would rest contented with its present state at home, when they saw it extended almost universally in France, Belgium, Germany, and nearly the whole of Italy. The next question of importance on which he wished the Government to state their views related to the management of their colonies. The proceedings which had taken place in some of our possessions lately had been disgraceful. He only wondered that the inhabitants had not been driven to desperation. Not one of the acts which had driven the Americans to rebellion, had been characterised by half the atrocity and tyranny of the arbitrary proceedings which had taken place in British Guiana, Ceylon, and the Mauritius. He considered that the noble Lord at the head of the colonies had forfeited every claim to support, and that Her Majesty's Government should at once remove him. It was impossible to maintain peace if they were to keep up such a system, and such a man. Would it be believed that in Ceylon the Government had hanged, quartered, and shot he did not know how many people? They had created a rebellion by the imposition of taxes, which every man who knew anything of the colony foretold would lead to such results. If the Government wished to reduce taxation, and to lessen the number of troops abroad, they must give the colonies self-government, and allow them to manage their own affairs. On all these points he would wish to hear some statement from the Government before he voted the Address to Her Majesty.

Mr. A. STAFFORD moved that the House do now adjourn.

The question having been put,

Lord J. RUSSELL said, he did not oppose the adjournment, if the hon. Member wished for it; but he certainly had expected that before the House rose that night, the first Amendment would have been disposed of. He proposed, therefore, that the House should divide on the first Amendment then, and take the second tomorrow.

Colonel SIBTHORP thought there should be ample opportunity given for discussing the Amendment.

Sir R. H. INGLIS supported the proposal of the noble Lord.

Mr. DISRAELI: But perhaps the hon. Member for Meath does not wish to divide.

Mr. GRATTAN: Certainly, Sir, I will divide.

Mr. A. STAFFORD withdrew his Motion for the adjournment, and

The House divided: The numbers were for Mr. Grattan's Amendment 12; against it 200: Majority 188.

List of the Ayes.

Acland, Sir T. D.
Adair, H. E.
Adair, R. A. S.
Adderley, C. B.
Aglionby, H. A.
Anson, hon. Col.
Anson, Visct.
Armstrong, Sir A.
Armstrong, R. B.
Arundel and Surrey, Earl of
Bagot, hon. W.
Bankes, G.
Baring, T.
Barrington, Visct.
Bass, T.
Bateson, T.
Bellew, R. M.
Bennet, P.
Bentinck, Lord H.
Berkeley, hon. Capt.
Berkeley, hon. H. F.
Berkeley, C. L. G.
Bernal, R.
Blackall, S. W.
Blair, S.
Bouverie, hon. E. P.
Bowles, Adm.
Boyle, hon. Col.
Bramston, T. W.
Bremridge, R.
Brooke, Lord
Brotherton, J.
Bunbury, E. H.
Campbell, hon. W. F.
Cardwell, E.
Cavendish, hon. C. C.
Cayley, E. S.
Charteris, hon. F.
Chichester, Lord J. L.
Childers, J. W.
Christopher, R. A.
Clay, J.
Clive, H. B.
Cocks, T. S.
Colebrooke, Sir T. E.
Corry, rt. hon. H. L.
Cowper, hon. W. F.
Craig, W. G.
Crowder, R. B.
Dawson, hon. T. V.
Disraeli, B.
Douglas, Sir C. E.
Duke, Sir J.
Dundas, Adm.
Dundas, Sir D.
Ebrington, Visct.
Egerton, Sir P.
Ellis, J.
Elliot, hon. J. E.
Evans, W.
Ewart, W.
Fellowes, E.
FitzPatrick, rt. hon. J.
Floyer, J.
Forbes, W.
Fordyce, A. D.
Forester, hon. G. C. W.
Fox, W. J.
Fuller, A. E.
Gaskell, J. M.
Gladstone, rt. hon. E. W.
Glynn, G. C.
Gordon, Adm.
Graham, rt. hon. Sir J.
Granby, Marq. of
Greene, T.
Grenfell, C. P.
Grenfell, C. W.
Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.
Grey, R. W.
Grosvenor, Earl
Gwyn, H.
Hardcastle, J. A.
Harris, hon. Capt.
Harris, R.
Hastie, A.
Hastie, A.
Hawes, B.
Hayter, W. G.
Headlam, T. E.
Herbert, rt. hon. S.
Herries, rt. hon. J. C.
Hervey, Lord A.
Hildyard, T. B. T.
Hobhouse, rt. hon. Sir J.
Hobhouse, T. B.
Hodges, T. L.
Hood, Sir A.
Hornby, J.
Horsman, E.
Howard, Lord E.
Howard, hon. C. W. G.
Hume, J.
Inglis, Sir R. H.
Jervis, Sir J.
Keppel, hon. G. T.
Kershaw, J.
Labouchere, rt. hon. H.
Langston, J. H.
Lascelles, hon. W. S.
Lennox, Lord H. G.
Lewis, G. C.
Lincoln, Earl of
Littleton, hon. E. R.
Locke, J.
Lushington, C.
Maitland, T.
Mandeville, Visct.
Mangles, R. D.
Manners, Lord G.
March, Earl of
Martin, J.
Martin, C. W.
Martin, S.
Maule, rt. hon. F.
Milner, W. M. E.
Milnes, R. M.
Mitchell, T. A.
Moffatt, G.
Mostyn, hon. E. M. L.
Mulgrave, Earl of
Newdegate, C. N.
Newport, Visct.
Newry and Morne, Visct.
Norreys, Lord
Nugent, Lord
Ogle, S. C. H.
Ossulston, Lord
Owen, Sir J.
Paget, Lord A.
Paget, Lord C.

Pakington, Sir J.
Palmer, R.
Palmerston, Visct.
Parker, J.
Pigott, F.
Plowden, W. H. C.
Price, Sir R.
Raphael, A.
Rawdon, Col.
Reid, Col.
Ricardo, O.
Rice, E. R.
Rich, H.
Richards, R.
Romilly, Sir J.
Rumbold, C. E.
Russell, Lord J.
Russell, hon. E. S.
Sandars, G.
Sandars, J.
Scrope, G. P.
Seymour, Lord
Sheil, rt. hon. R. L.
Shelburne, Earl of
Simeon, J.
Smith, rt. hon. R. V.
Smith, J. A.
Smythe, hon. G.
Somerville, rt. hn. Sir W.
Spearman, H. J.
Spooner, R.
Stafford, A.
Stanton, W. H.
Stuart, Lord D.
Stuart, J.
Sturt, H. G.
Talfourd, Serj.
Tennent, R. J.
Thompson, Col.
Thompson, Ald.
Thompson, G.
Thornely, T.
Towneley, J.
Turner, G. J.
Tynte, Col. C. J. K.
Tyrell, Sir J. T.
Vane, Lord H.
Villiers, Visct.
Waddington, H. S.
Ward, H. G.
Watkins, Col. L.
Willoughby, Sir H.
Wilson, J.
Wilson, M.
Wodehouse, E.
Wood, rt. hon. Sir C.
Wood, W. P.
Wyld, J.
Wyvill, M.

TELLERS.
Tufnell, H.
Hill, Lord M.

List of the NOES.

Anstey, T. C.
Devereux, J. T.
Fagan, W.
Greene, J.
Herbert, H. A.
Meagher, T.
Moore, G. H.
Muntz, G. F.
O'Flaherty, A.
Roche, E. B.
Scholefield, W.
Sullivan, M.

TELLERS.
Grattan, H.
O'Connell, J.

The debate on Mr. Disraeli's Amendment adjourned.

House adjourned at half-past Twelve.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, February 2, 1849.

MINUTES.] NEW WRITS. For Donegal County, *v.* Edward Michael Conolly, Esq., deceased; For Cardigan, District of, Boroughs, *v.* Pryse Pryse, Esq., deceased.

PUBLIC BILLS.—1° Inland Revenue.

PETITIONS PRESENTED. By Mr. Stafford, from Peterborough, respecting Lay Clerks connected with Cathedral Churches.—By Sir R. H. Inglis, from the Parish of Leswalt, in the County of Wigton, for a Better Observance of the Lord's Day; also from the Inhabitants of Shotover, in the County of Oxford, against the Endowment of the Roman Catholic Clergy.—By Mr. Grenville Berkeley, from the Board of Guardians of the Cheltenham Union, for the Suppression of Mendicancy.—By Mr. Lushington, from a Meeting held at the Western Literary and Scientific Institution, Leicester Square, for an Alteration of the Poor Law.—By Mr. Henley, from the Town of Henley-upon-Thames, and its Vicinity, respecting the Appropriation of Waste Lands in aid of the Poor Law.—By Mr. Fuller, from the Board of Guardians of the Cuckfield Union, Sussex, for an Alteration of the Sale of Beer Act.—By Mr. Anstey, from Mallow, and several other Places in Ireland, for a Better Regulation of the Salmon Fisheries (Ireland).—By Mr. Mitchell, from Bridport, and its Neighbourhood, for Referring War Disputes to Arbitration.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR J. PAKINGTON asked the noble Lord at the head of the Government if it was the intention of Her Majesty's Ministers to propose any alterations in the rules and orders of the House for the regulation of the business of the House, in conformity with the recommendations of the Select Committee appointed last Session to inquire into the best means of facilitating the despatch of public business?

Lord J. RUSSELL: I thank the hon. Baronet for having put this question. If he had not put it I was about to have stated that I do mean to propose several resolutions in pursuance of the report of the Select Committee which sat last Session. I mean likewise to propose some other resolutions upon the subject of the Sessional Orders, which will, I think, make an improvement in the mode of carrying on the business of this House. I will take care that the resolutions which I mean to propose shall be in the hands of Members to-morrow morning, as I propose to bring on the question the first thing on Monday. There are, however, some resolutions which it would be desirable to pass immediately, such as those affecting orders and notices; but with regard to the others I shall be quite ready, if the House require time for further deliberation—that is, with regard to those not immediately pressing—to consent to the consideration of them not being immediately proceeded with.

THE RAJAHSHIP OF SATTARA.

MR. HUME asked the noble Lord whether it was correct that the Court of Directors of the East India Company, or the Secret Committee of that court, had, with the sanction of Her Majesty's Government, sent orders to take possession of the territory of the late Rajah of Sattara, and thereby to depose the legal and the adopted heirs of the territories guaranteed by solemn treaty with the East India Company to them and their heirs for ever?

Lord J. RUSSELL, in reply, said it was true that the Directors of the East India Company, and the members of the Board of Control, had sent out despatches desiring that the territory of the late Rajah of Sattara should be resumed by the Government. It was not true, however, that any person had been deposed, because there was no person who had a right to the territory.

RECTORY OF BISHOPWEARMOUTH—ECCLESIASTICAL REFORM.

Mr. HORSMAN reminded the House that he had yesterday given notice of a question to the noble Lord respecting the future distribution of the temporalities of the rectory of Bishopwearmouth. As that rectory was in the patronage of the Bishop of Durham, and as the intended arrangements were exciting great interest in the neighbourhood of the parish, it might be convenient that the noble Lord should have some further communication with the right rev. Prelate before he answered the question. With that view, he (Mr. Horsman) would postpone the question till this day week. He now begged to ask the noble Lord what measures of ecclesiastical reform were intended to be introduced by Her Majesty's Government in the course of this Session, to what subjects they referred, and when they might be expected to be brought forward?

Lord J. RUSSELL said, that with regard to the first subject referred to by the hon. Gentleman, he had had some correspondence with the Bishop of Durham, and the right rev. Prelate had informed him that he believed the district was satisfied with the arrangements he had made. What those arrangements were, he was not at present able to state. Whatever they might be—though he should be happy to give all the information in his power—he had no means of altering or modifying them. With reference to the other question, he could only state that he had thought it necessary, as a preliminary measure, to advise the Crown to appoint a Commission to inquire whether the property of the Church might not be made more available for instruction, without trenching upon the reasonable claims of lessees, and to ascertain the income of the Church which should be available for the further extension of religion. That Commission had been only lately appointed; and until some progress had been made, it was impossible for him to state either what measures would be prepared, or when he should bring them forward.

Mr. HUME asked if there were any objection to instruct the Commissioners to inquire to what churches, and in what places, large incomes or allowances were attached, though they had little or no congregations. For instance, in the city of London there were seventy or eighty churches with congregations of no more than eight or ten persons. Was it not desirable to ascertain whether the incomes of those churches should not be applied to places where the population was greater?

Lord J. RUSSELL said, this question might be a fit subject for consideration in some other way; but as it had nothing to do with the duties assigned to the Commissioners, he did not see how they could deal with it.

Colonel SIBTHORP inquired whether the Commissioners were to be paid?

Lord J. RUSSELL: It will be an unpaid Commission; but the secretary of course will be paid.

Mr. HORSMAN said, the Commission was appointed upon certain subjects totally independent of the measures which were promised to be brought forward. He would call the attention of the noble Lord to those measures on Monday, for the purpose of asking whether any of them were intended to be brought forward this Session.

Lord J. RUSSELL said, he might as well say at once that Her Majesty's Government did not mean to introduce a number of measures which there was no prospect of carrying. The notices already given upon the part of Members of the Government, would occupy the attention of the House for a very considerable time.

THE INFANT PAUPER ASYLUM AT TOOTING.

Colonel SIBTHORP asked the noble Lord if he was able to promise that a searching inquiry should be made by the proper department into the conduct of all parties connected with the farming out of pauper children at the establishment in Tooting?

Lord J. RUSSELL: The whole subject is under the consideration of the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and of the President of the Poor Law Commission. I cannot precisely answer the question of the hon. and gallant Member; but I can assure him that both my right hon. Friend and the President of the Poor Law Commission are anxious for the fullest inquiry, in order that the dreadful scenes that have lately occurred at Tooting shall be prevented in future.

THE ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO THE SPEECH—ADJOURNED DEBATE.

Mr. A. STAFFORD resumed the adjourned debate, by stating that he thought the course the most convenient to be adopted was to move the adjournment of the debate on the first Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Buckinghamshire, because he felt it impossible to pass by the subject after what had been stated by the noble Lord at the head of the Government, without first making some further allusions to the subject of Ireland; and what the noble Lord had stated confirmed him in the view he had taken of the matter, and the necessity which existed for postponing the subject of Ireland till a future period. He should, therefore, for the present address himself to some of the observations made by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose. The hon. Gentleman asked the agricultural Members what they proposed for the relief of their particular interest? And well he might ask that question; for not only was no allusion made to that interest in the Speech from the Throne, but neither the noble Lord who had moved, nor the hon. Gentletleman who had seconded the Motion for the adoption of the Address, adverted in the remotest way to that important topic. He was the more surprised at the silence of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Bury on the subject, for that hon. Gentleman's constituency was closely connected with agriculture; and the House, therefore, had a right to expect from him some explanation connected with the welfare of the agricultural interest of the country. He begged to ask the hon. Gentleman whether Suffolk was very far from Cambridgeshire, and whether he had not heard of certain agricultural meetings recently held in the latter county. If the hon. Gentleman had heard of those meetings, perhaps he would be good enough to inform the House whether some of those who attended those meetings did not state the nature of their difficulties, and propound and enforce upon the resident gentry of the neighbourhood a remedy for those difficulties, which remedy would probably not be very acceptable to the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He would now ask the hon. Member for Montrose a question. How came it, that instead of being, as the House was led to expect last Session, at the head of a large well-compacted party, well disciplined, and with clearly defined objects, he had sunk into the character of an humble inquirer? If he understood the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hume) aright, his statement last night amounted to this—that the constituencies of this empire were so well satisfied with the working of the new system of free trade that they would not, under any pretence, ever return to the old system. If the hon. Gentleman referred to what took place on the previous evening, he would perceive that, in a neighbouring country, according to the statements of the representatives of that country, a reaction had already commenced; and in France, however much they might have changed their mode of government, not the least sign of an intention to approximate to our system of free trade had yet been exhibited by them. He maintained that a reaction against the free-trade system had already set in in this country, in spite of the predictions of the hon. Gentleman opposite the Member for the West Riding of Yorkshire. Had that hon. Gentleman never, in his communings with society, heard a wish expressed, not by besotted squires or farmers, but by practical men of business, for a low, it might be, but at the same time a fixed, duty? Let him remind those hon. Gentlemen who vaunted so highly the merits of their own schemes, that a new system of finance, and not merely the duty on corn, was now in question. The hon. Gentleman said there was no public desire to retrace the steps which had been taken; but, next to retracing their steps, he begged to remind the hon. Gentleman that signs of contrition for past errors were generally the precursors of future amendment. Let him ask those Gentlemen who talked so loudly in favour of the new system of policy, what was the course they adopted last year? They rejoiced that yesterday the duties upon food were practically abrogated; but let him remind them that at the period when the duties upon corn were fiercely and unremittingly attacked, they were not the only duties which were the subject of reprobation. They then heard, not only of the poor man's loaf, but of the poor man's butter, and the poor man's cheese; and he now asked these consistent politicians and undeviating free-traders, those staunch disciples of the new school, how came it to pass that, during the whole of the last Session of Parliament, their voices were never once raised on behalf of the poor man's butter and slice of cheese, and that they suffered the whole Session to elapse without making the least effort to cheapen those articles by the removal of the import duty, which now helped to swell the public revenue, and to increase the apparent balance in the hands of the Chancellor of the Exchequer? Why had they permitted the opportunity to escape, and the whole Session to pass away, without putting forth a single attempt to follow up a system with the working of which they had declared themselves to be so satisfied? Would those hon. Gentlemen — acute and sharp accountants as they were—tell him to what extent the duty upon butter and cheese had raised the prices of those articles to the consumer? And when they had favoured him with an answer to that question, would they tell him how much the 800,000*l.* revenue derived from the duty upon the importation of foreign corn under the sliding-scale, which expired yesterday, had raised the price of corn in the British market? If it were a fact that five-sixths of that amount of duty were paid by the foreigner, would they assert that the people of England were to be scared by the name of free trade — never more than a name, and that a false name and a delusion? Would they tell him that the people of England, with their heavy pressure of taxation, and with their undoubted desire not only to maintain firm faith with the public creditor, but to support unimpaired the efficiency of the great establishments of the country, were to be scared by a name from determining upon a return to a moderate system of import duties, as a means of obtaining a certain amount of revenue? The protectionist looked to the producer of corn. The free-trader looked to the consumer of bread; and each were alike anxious to secure the interests of their respective clients. But the revenue looked to both parties as contributors to the public fund; and those whose business it was to see that the revenue was made good, also looked to both producer and consumer. The object which he and those around him sought to effect was, to balance both classes equally, and not to be scared by a mere name from acting justly, but to take due means for levying a revenue upon a proper article of taxation. There had been too many duties repealed for the Exchequer, but not enough to carry out the free-trade principle; and those who advocated cheapness as the only test of consumption might discover, too late, that their doctrines touched themselves as well as the protectionists. Hon. Gentlemen were fond of using the term "prohibitionists" when speaking of the protectionist party, but he denied the appropriateness of its application; for, as he had said a fortnight ago, in the midst of an assembly of farmers, whilst prohibitionists would make an insurmountable barrier of the custom-house, and free-traders would make it a desolation, protectionists would simply make of it a well-guarded frontier. Society was constituted of consumers as well as producers; and the true principle to act upon—though it was not the one which found favour with the present Ministers, or with the House—was to balance the claims of both parties carefully, and to arrange the incidents of taxation with reference to statesmanlike considerations, not in obedience to impracticable theories. His feeling was, not that this or that duty should not be taken into consideration, or that the principle of protection did not admit of great modifications—sometimes by increasing, sometimes by repealing, sometimes by imposing duties; but to those who advocated the principle that cheapness, and cheapness alone, in reference to every commodity, was the only guide for those who had to legislate upon commercial questions, he would say that they were advocating a principle which might recoil upon themselves before they might be aware of it, when they would discover that they had been lending themselves to the designs of men whose real objects went far beyond the mere abolition of the corn laws. After having declared that Government should lose its paternal character, and become a mere police agent—after having thus contracted the functions of Government, and told the people it ought not to interfere so much as it had done, and that henceforth many old Governmental functions ought to be abandoned, would hon. Gentlemen be able to answer the people when they turned round upon them and said, "If the Government are to do less for us, we will pay less for them?" What would hon. Gentlemen say, when the people began to apply that argument, and to insist upon having cheap government also? Already the farmers of the country had taken up with formidable unity and force the question of the repeal of the malt tax. He (Mr. Stafford) was to attend one of their meetings on Tuesday next, and when he should say to the assembled farmers, "It is necessary to continue this large public expenditure for the maintenance of our establishments and the preservation of our colonial empire," the instant reply will be, "Oh! we have no time under the existing pressure of our difficulties to think of these things. We have been over and over again assured by those who hold the reins of power, as well as by those who aspire to hold them, that cheapness, and cheapness only, is the 'be-all and the end-all' of legislation; and if that is so, give us, we say, our cheap corn for the feeding and fattening of our cattle, and supplying our labourers with cheap beer." Pressed down with difficulties, and smarting under a sense of injustice, as the farmers were at the present moment, how would hon. Gentlemen be able to deal with this argument when they came to defend the malt tax, or any other large item of public revenue? Since the farmers had united to maintain a law since abolished, it might be imagined that their union to destroy a law would be equally inefficacious; but let him remind the House that it was far easier to destroy than to construct. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had, for instance, succeeded in destroying the corn laws; but up to this period they had exhibited no proof whatever of their reconstructive powers. The position of the farmer was, however, exactly what he had described; and the position of those who represented the interests of the farmers was exactly the difficult and dangerous one which he had felt it to be his duty to bring under the notice of the House. Another question connected with the free-trade system had of late been gaining strength — the cultivation of tobacco in Ireland. Formerly a considerable quantity of tobacco was grown in that country, but a prohibition was placed upon it. But it was said, " We cannot permit the farmers in Ireland to make a free use of their own ground, because the revenue from tobacco is so large;" thus affording protection to the foreign grower at the expense of the Irish one. It was said, " The duty upon tobacco is levied for purposes of revenue, and not for the purpose of protection;" but such an argument as this was a mere juggle of words. Why, what was the malt tax itself, but a protection to the cider-growing counties? The prohibition of the growth of tobacco in Ireland was, so far as it went, a protection to the foreign and colonial tobacco producer, to the great disadvantage of the Irish farmer; and they might depend upon it that in this and in many other instances, they must either stop short in the course they had been pursuing, or sap the very foundations of the public credit. Unless they returned to the system which they now professed to denounce, they would never be able to levy sufficient taxation for the maintenance of our institutions and the preservation of public credit, let them make what reductions they might in our establishments. He had last night moved the adjournment of the debate on the Amendment of the hon. Member for Meath (Mr. Grattan), because he conceived that the observations of the noble Lord opposite (Lord J. Russell), with regard to the Irish Poor Law, called for some answer. He should, therefore, trouble the House with a few remarks upon that subject; and he was the more confirmed in his opinion of the absolute necessity for bringing it under the consideration of the House by what had fallen from the noble Lord since he had entered the House this evening. If he understood the noble Lord aright, he stated that he would bring on the Sessional Orders for discussion on Monday next; and as it was extremely improbable that the debate could close on Monday night, there would be another postponement of the appointment of the intended Committee. When he read in the Speech from the Throne that " the operation of the laws for the relief of the poor in Ireland would properly be a subject for inquiry;" he felt it impossible to make any other than an interrogatory remark to the noble Lord with regard to the course which he proposed to take on that question. It was certainly quite competent for Government, as they did with the Landlord and Tenant Bill last year, to bring in a measure, and then refer it to a Committee; but he had heard with surprise and regret that it was not their intention even to lay down the principle of any measure, but to throw the whole thing before a Committee of Irish Members, and trust to their unanimity, or, at all events, to their report, before the Government would take upon themselves what he (Mr. Stafford) must say, a statesmanlike, a manly, and a bold Government ought to have taken upon themselves at the commencement of the Session of Parliament. The noble Lord referred, with some degree of mirth, to a meeting of nine Irish Members at which five different opinions were entertained. The noble Lord had got a cheer and a smile from his side of the House when he did so; and yet if this case in point was good for anything, it was good against the appointment of any Committee. Why should the noble Lord consider, if nine Irish Members disagreed in Dublin, that fifteen Irish Members would agree in London? Would he put those nine Members upon his Committee? If he did not, the inference would be, that the noble Lord objected to all their plans; and if he did put them on the Committee, it would be taken as a proof that he had no hope of unanimity from that Committee. The great question, with regard to the poor-law in Ireland, was the size of the area. It was considered to be of first-rate importance. He (Mr. Stafford) advocated the smaller rating two years ago, when he could scarcely obtain a hearing, certainly not an answer, from the right hon. Gentleman who, unfortunately for himself and for Ireland, was then Irish Secretary. He advocated it again last year, and there had not only been a Committee appointed, but a Commission issued; and not only was a Commission issued, but that Commission sent round to every board of guardians in Ireland questions upon this very subject; so that he should really say, if there was one question more than another upon which Government could obtain accurate and decisive information, it would be the very subject upon which they now declined to legislate. He maintained that the Government, through the Commission, was in full possession of the opinions of the different boards of guardians upon the subject of the diminution of the area of taxation, and that no more valuable information could be obtained than that they were already in possession of. The conduct of the Government appeared to him very inconsistent in the course they took with respect to Ireland. With respect to the renewal of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and the regranting of extraordinary powers to the Lord Lieutenant, the noble Lord stated, that the demand was made because the Lord Lieutenant had received information which convinced him that those measures were necessary. Now, if the noble Lord pursued such a course in the case of measures of a coercive nature, why should he not adopt it in the case of measures of a remedial character? Why should he in those measures shrink from the responsibility naturally devolving upon the Government, and shift that responsibility upon a Committee of the House of Commons? The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Ireland (Sir W. Somerville) was to move the appointment of that Committee, and he supposed the right hon. Gentleman would be chairman of it. If so, it was easy to see what would be the animus of the Committee. The right hon. Gentleman was a great advocate for an enlarged area of taxation; and, therefore, they might conclude that the Government had made up their minds to the adoption of the large area system. But what he wanted to know from Government—what he wanted to have stated from the Treasury bench that night was, how they were going to stand by the Irish poor-laws at all. In Ireland many influential journals protested against all relief to the able-bodied; many insisted upon the repeal of the quarter-acre clause; a large body of the clergy, again, were dissatisfied with the arrangement with respect to tithe commutation; and many were of opinion that the rates should fall upon the land altogether. Amid this chaos of opinions, he asked the Government to declare at once what portion of the Bill they purposed to dispense with, and what they were prepared to retain? If the Cabinet had made up their minds upon the subject—if the noble Lord were able to state, as he ought to be, the opinion of himself and his Colleagues—he should at once declare it, and he would thus put at rest a great deal of anxiety and disquietude in Ireland. The universal inference derived from the silence of the Cabinet was, that they were not united upon the question of the Irish Poor Law—that they could not bring forward a measure with reference to that great subject, because their own opinions were discordant. The Irish Members were taunted with a want of unanimity. He hoped he should hear no more of that taunt. Why should there be one measure applied to the Irish Members, and another to the English? The latter had their differences of opinion as well as the Irish Members. But did the Government wait for unanimity among the English county Members before repealing the corn laws? Did they wait for unanimity among the English manufacturing Members before passing the Ten Hours Bill? Did they wait for unanimity among the Irish Members before passing the Irish Poor Law itself? It was unfair then to draw these distinctions. Instead, then, of making want of unanimity among the Irish Members a reason for the dilatory course of appointing a Committee, the best way would be boldly to act with respect to the poor-law as they proposed with regard to the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and bring forward the subject in a statesmanlike manner, and try the issue before the House. But they had also a Registration Bill which they were going to bring forward without waiting for the report of a Committee. Their coercive measures, too, required no report from a Committee; and why, then, should the poor-law form an exception? The fact was, the Cabinet was divided on the question, and they wished to shift the responsibility from their own shoulders. With regard to the other points of the Amendment, he had already trespassed too long upon the time of the House to say much upon them. Not wishing to pronounce any sentence of censure on the noble Viscount (Viscount Palmerston) with reference to particular cases, he must be allowed to express his regret that the Speech from the Throne did not contain the customary paragraph stating that Her Majesty still continued to receive assurances of friendship from her various foreign allies. As to any explanations that might be demanded on those matters, he found it was generally stated either that negotiations were still pending, and therefore that any disclosures would be premature, or that the negotiations were past, and therefore that it was too late to argue the question. He had heard long speeches and lengthy debates on subjects of this kind, but had always found, after the froth was blown away, that was all that remained. Turning now to another department of affairs, he apprehended that after the grave charge which the hon. Member for Montrose made against the Colonial Secretary, it would be extremely unlike that hon. Gentleman's character if he allowed the case to drop. [Mr. HUME: Hear!] He understood from that cheer it was his intention to follow up in an energetic manner the very grave, the tremendous censure he had passed upon the Colonial Minister. If the hon. Gentleman succeeded in turning out the present Secretary, he apprehended that his successor, whoever he should be, would feel and admit that the colonies had grown too extensive to be governed properly by a single Secretary. He should vote for the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Buckinghamshire, because he felt, that when other interests were maintained, the oldest and largest interest ought not to have been omitted from the Speech. Either the agricultural interest was flourishing, and ought to have been a matter for congratulation, or the agricultural interest was suffering, and ought to have been subject of condolence; but at this time, because they could say nothing congratulatory, Her Majesty's Government had determined to say nothing in the way of sympathy. That was treatment which, he thought, the farmers of England had no right to expect from the First Minister of the Crown. That was not the course which the representatives of the agricultural interest could allow to pass unnoticed, and therefore they had a right to propose this Amendment. The agricultural interest had a claim to the sympathy of the Legislature, and those who conceded that claim would vote for the Amendment, while those who were indifferent as to whether the agricultural interest was flourishing or depressed, would no doubt vote against it. But let him tell the House and the Government that the farmers would experience the deepest regret when they found no sympathy prevailed in the House for their sufferings; but, notwithstanding the abuse which had been heaped upon them—notwithstanding they were considered to be a falling and a weak body—they still had the means of making their representatives understand their feelings—they still had the means of punishing those who showed themselves indifferent to their interest.

SIR W. SOMERVILLE said, it was not his intention to have taken any part in the debate, and he now rose merely in consequence of the most extraordinary speech of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down. He would only trouble the House, however, with a very few remarks, those having reference to the subject of the Irish Poor Law. The hon. Gentleman brought an accusation against the Government for having consented now to appoint a Committee upon the Irish Poor Law. Why, he (Sir W. Somerville) remembered that last Session, when his hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Dunne) brought forward a Motion for a Committee upon that same law, great objections were taken to the course which the Government pursued on that occasion. The Government were accused of resisting the almost unanimous opinion of the Irish Members; and when they asked the House to wait until they should receive the report of the Commission, that they might have some evidence as to the working of the law, that was not admitted to be a valid excuse, but they were taunted with an indisposition to the wishes of Irish Members upon a question vitally affecting the interests of the country. Well, the hon. Gentleman said that the Government had got the information now upon which they might act—

that there was the report of a Commission now lying upon the table of the House, which gave them all the information which they could require upon the question of reducing or enlarging the area of taxation; and that therefore they should act without the intervention of a Committee at all. But he would remind his hon. Friend, that that Commission was promised at the very time when his hon. and gallant Friend moved for his Committee. The promise of the Government, however, that that Commission should be issued, and every possible information collected, was not at all taken to be a valid reason why the Motion of his hon. and gallant Friend should not be made. On the contrary, his hon. and gallant Friend pressed his Motion, and still refused to wait for the Commission. The hon. Gentleman who had last addressed the House, stated that he (Sir W. Somerville) had always been an advocate for a very large area of taxation. He certainly was not aware that he had ever pledged himself to any such opinion. His hon. Friend had denied last Session having ever advocated a townland rating in that House; but on going home he (Sir W. Somerville) took the trouble, or rather had the pleasure, of looking over the speech of his hon. Friend to which he had alluded, and he was certainly confirmed in the opinion that the tenor of it throughout was in favour of a townland rating, as being the only one applicable to the condition of Ireland. He forbore from entering at present further into the question of the Irish Poor Law. The Government were determined to keep the promise they made in the last Session, that at the commencement of the present Session they would concede the appointment of the Committee which they then resisted. The Government did not intend, as his hon. Friend supposed, to throw the whole question, as he said, loose before that Committee. He hoped that they should have before that Committee views that would serve as a compass by which they would be guided in their decision and their inquiries; but on a question of so much importance—a question which might be regarded as the foundation on which the superstructure of society in Ireland must be raised—he did not think it was unreasonable, or unfair, or inconsistent in the Government to adhere to the promise which they made last Session, and to ask the House now to make an inquiry before proceeding to legislate on the more difficult questions in connexion with the Irish Poor Law. He hoped that they would all meet in that Committee in a friendly spirit, and with a determination to thoroughly sift this important subject. The hon. Gentleman had entirely begged the question. As to the argument that they were not likely to be unanimous, he had only to say that he did not think it necessary that they should be so, or that unanimity was expected from them. The object of the Committee was to collect the best information in their power, and to recommend the most salutary amendments that might occur to them. It was with extreme surprise that he had heard the speech of the hon. Member for Meath (Mr. Grattan) upon the previous evening, and he sincerely trusted that the House would not be led away by the exaggerated statements which it contained. [Mr. GRATTAN: Correct me where I was wrong.] Why, the hon. and learned Gentleman stated that he was a ruined man. His hon. and learned Friend stated that if he were a younger man he would run away from Ireland altogether—that he was ruined by the poor-rate, and that there was no staying in the country; and he had talked of the Celbridge union. Now, what did the House suppose was the amount of the rate in the Celbridge union last year, which had ruined his hon. and learned Friend? Just 7¾*d.* in the pound. [Mr. GRATTAN: The rating is 11*d.*] He begged pardon, he had made a slight mistake. The amount of the rate collected was 10½*d.*, but the expenses were just 7¾*d.*; so that the guardians of the Celbridge union had a considerable sum to their credit in the bank. Then his hon. Friend stated that the Government were demoralising and ruining the country, and he added that there were 400,000 ablebodied men at present receiving outdoor relief throughout Ireland. Now, in opposition to that statement, he (Sir W. Somerville could assure the House that at that period of last year, when the maximum number of ablebodied men were receiving relief, they did not exceed 65,000. He knew that his hon. and learned Friend made these statements without sufficient knowledge; but that was just what he complained of, and what he wished particularly his hon. Friend would guard against. Once more, with regard to the Committee, he might state that it was his own wish, and the wish of Her Majesty's Government, that it should be entered upon at as early a period as possible, with the hope of coming to a speedy decision, and effecting speedy legislation upon the subject. Though he happened to belong to a part of the country which was not suffering that misery, destitution, and distress which unfortunately afflicted other portions of Ireland, yet he equally felt and sympathised with their misfortunes, and for the sake of the whole country he was most anxious that legislation in this direction should be of a satisfactory character. He was almost forgetting the promise which he made to the House of not entering into the question of the Irish Poor Law on the present occasion; and he should only add in conclusion that he hoped the Committee would be acceded to, and that it would get through its duties in a manner to lead to speedy legislation on this important subject.

MR. GRATTAN explained. He thanked Heaven that he was not an Irish Secretary. The rate which the right hon. Gentleman had referred to was 1*s.* 3*d.* and 2*s.* 10*d.* instead of 7*d.* The right hon. Gentleman sent down an inspector from Downing-street to the union; but they liked a plain honest man, and turned the fine gentleman out. They then taxed themselves, and paid, some 10*l.*, some 5*l.*, and, in one instance, an individual holding twenty acres of land, gave employment to no less than thirty labourers. His poor-rates, however, were doubled; and for eighty acres, he paid 40*l.* to the poor, and in that entire union only 30*l.* came from Government. That showed what Irish gentlemen could do when they liked, and was, he thought, a sufficient answer to the "correct" statement of the Irish Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman's statement was founded on error; and he (Mr. Grattan) once more congratulated himself that he was not an Irish Secretary.

SIR J. WALSH blamed the Government for not devising, ere the meeting of Parliament, measures to remedy the defects in the present poor-law. The feeling throughout the whole of that country was universal in favour of an immediate amelioration of that law. He did not think that his hon. Friend near him (Mr. Stafford) was at all open to the charge of inconsistency for the course which he now advocated in respect to the Irish Poor Law. Among every class of persons in Ireland, whether landlords or tenants, but one feeling prevailed, namely, that immediate legislation was necessary on this subject. And, he would ask, had they not some reason to apprehend that, as the right hon. Gentleman thought last year that the appointment of the Committee moved for by his hon. and gallant Friend had a tendency to lead to a getting rid of the question of liability, so the appointment of the Committee at present might be intended by Government merely as a means to avoid immediate legislation on this subject. That this view was not entirely without foundation would appear from the little success which followed the appointment of the Committees on finance and other matters last Session. It was quite possible that the whole Session might be wasted in inquiry, and that in the end nothing would be done; and yet the opinion of every man who had devoted attention to this question was, that another year could not pass without some remedy being applied to the present evils, if it were intended to save Ireland from entire destruction. He (Sir J. Walsh) did not oppose the Irish Poor Law Committee promised by the Government; but it was his opinion that Her Majesty's Ministers should have come forward with a very different proposition, seeing that they had all the materials at hand to come to a sufficient conclusion on the subject. He should only add further on this subject, that as the right hon. Gentleman had held out something like a hope to them that they would not be asked to go into that Committee without some sort of compass to guide them, he trusted that the compass would prove to be a true one, and would point to a real remedy for the evils to be redressed. He should take that opportunity of saying a few words on another subject connected with the Address. He was extremely desirous to ascertain whether the information which he had received from the noble Lord opposite (Lord John Russell) at the close of the last Session, on the Sicilian question, was still to be taken as the whole state of the case, or whether any misconception prevailed in his mind with regard to what the noble Lord had stated. It would be recollected, that the proceedings of the fleet under Sir W. Parker, in the Bay of Naples, had given rise to certain questions, which were put by Lord Stanley, in the other House of Parliament, and by his lamented Friend, the late Lord George Bentinck, in that House. The noble Lord at the head of the Foreign Department, shrouding himself in that diplomatic reserve which so distinguished him, gave a distinct refusal to impart the least information on the subject; but hon.

Members on that (the Opposition) side of the House thought that an armed intervention of that character was a subject on which Her Majesty's Ministers were bound to tender some information to the House, and that they ought to be told with what intentions such warlike demonstrations were made. He (Sir J. Walsh) accordingly gave notice of a Motion, to the effect that the appearance of the British fleet under Sir William Parker, in the Bay of Naples, called for some explanation from Her Majesty's Government. He had been obliged to bring forward his Motion as an Amendment on going into Committee of Supply. The noble Lord at the head of Foreign Affairs was not in the House on the occasion; but the noble Lord at the head of Her Majesty's Government, after in vain endeavouring to induce him not to press his Motion, tendered some explanations on the subject. The noble Lord stated three grounds for the course pursued by Sir William Parker: first, that there had been some violation of the respect which was due to the British flag, by some Neapolitan vessels of war having hoisted the British flag, and thus decoyed and captured a Sicilian vessel; secondly, that it was believed some intention was entertained of raising a forced loan in Naples, which might affect English subjects residing there, by compelling them to contribute to it, if there was no protection near them; and the third ground was, that the neutral waters of Corfu had been violated by the Neapolitan fleet, while in pursuit of Sicilian vessels. These were reasons which it must have been satisfactory to the House and to the country to have heard, because wherever the English flag floats, it is expected that the Navy of England will be ever ready to enforce respect for it. But he had thought it necessary to ask the noble Lord farther, whether Sir William Parker had, either *in propria motu*, or by instructions from home, infringed in any way the bounds of strict neutrality in the contest then going forward, or whether he had at all interposed to prevent the sailing of the fleet intended for the subjugation of Sicily. The noble Lord replied in the negative, and distinctly stated, that neither on his own responsibility, nor in consequence of instructions from the Government at home, had Sir William Parker interfered in any way in the contest between the King of Naples and the revolted Sicilians; but said that he would not bind the hands of the Government with respect to any contingencies which might subsequently arise. He had not asked the noble Lord to give any engagement as to the future; but he would now request the House to look at the position in which the question was placed by that declaration of the noble Lord. The noble Lord was a Member of a Government and of a party that had always advocated the principle of non-intervention in the affairs of foreign States, and had declared that, up to that period, the English Government had in no respect interfered in the quarrel that existed between the King of Naples and his Sicilian subjects. What, he would ask, was the construction that the Neapolitan Government would naturally draw from that declaration of the noble Lord? Was it not that the English Government would not interfere in their affairs, and was it not to be expected that they would therefore be justified, to a certain degree, in adapting their policy to that view? It appeared, therefore, that Sir William Parker had offered no obstruction to the Neapolitan expedition, though, if any just right existed for British interference, that was the time for doing so. The expedition to Messina was successful. The authority of the King of Naples was re-established in Messina, and there was every probability that that authority would be promptly acknowledged throughout the whole of Sicily. He wished to know, therefore, under what pretence the subsequent interference was justified. If he understood the noble Lord, it was because certain revolting atrocities had taken place, and the French and English admirals thought it necessary to interfere to stop these atrocities. By whom were they committed? It was said that some of the unfortunate soldiers of the Neapolitan army were killed and eaten. If such stories were without foundation, he hoped they would meet from a competent quarter a complete refutation. It should, however, be observed, that there was a peculiar feature in modern warfare. The population had become half military, and had adopted a system of strategy which made them formidable antagonists to the regular troops; it was therefore necessary to deal with them in a military spirit. It was a very striking remark made by General Cavaignac in the Chamber of Deputies, when he said that all the great revolutions which had taken place in Paris within the last 20 years had been in consequence of the military leaders considering that popular revolts were mere affairs of police, and were not to be dealt with in a military manner. He admitted fully the responsibility of the Foreign Secretary, and that a certain amount of discretion ought to be placed in the noble Lord the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; but the noble Lord appeared to strain the doctrine to a most extravagant length. The noble Lord was the great advocate of liberal and representative institutions throughout Europe; he was desirous to extend popular and free institutions; but there was one branch of affairs which he wished to carry on precisely on the principles on which Nesselrode and Metternich had always acted —one little oasis which he wished to exempt from popular control, and that was the Foreign Office in Downing-street. The principles which he sought to introduce would set aside all control on the part of the people. Were Members, when most momentous affairs were passing around them, never to venture to offer a remark? Were they never to venture in the slightest degree to question the inviolability of the Foreign Office? He trusted that the House of Commons would not think it necessary so blindly to relinquish all power, all right of examination or inquiry into subjects which influenced the destinies of this country in so momentous a degree; and that the public opinion, which, operating through the legitimate channel of the House of Commons, was in all other departments of the State found to be so useful, would not be considered of a dangerous and exceptional character when applied to the department of the Foreign Office. There were one or two other topics in the Address to which he wished briefly to revert. They were promised by the noble Lord a very substantial financial reform; and he was sure that if these promises of retrenchment could be safely carried out in the present state of the affairs of Europe, they would all feel reason to be gratified. But he should say that there was a very great inconsistency between the language used by the noble Lord on this subject in the present Session, and that which he had so eloquently devoted to the same question in the last Session of Parliament. The noble Lord had touched largely upon the affairs of Ireland, and had pronounced a high eulogium upon the ablest Lord Lieutenant that he (Sir John Walsh) thought had ever presided over the fortunes of that people; and to that portion of the noble Lord's speech he (Sir J. Walsh) must give his unqualified adhesion. He had watched the temper, the firmness, the forbearance of Lord Clarendon, in administering the affairs of Ireland, with the greatest satisfaction; and therefore he could cordially go along with the noble Lord in the eulogy he had pronounced. There was, particularly, one part of Lord Clarendon's conduct which deserved admiration and praise, and that was the spirit in which all his public documents and public addresses were conceived. He especially referred to the answer which the noble Lord had given to an address from the corporation of Dublin, when his Lordship, in the most felicitous manner, reminded them of the necessity there was that Ireland should not be dependent upon the assistance of others, but that she should depend upon her own resources, and stated, among other things, that a period must be placed to that pernicious system of political agitation which had convulsed that country for years, and which he thought (and most justly) was the great obstacle to the pacification, the progress, and the improvement of Ireland. He agreed with the noble Lord. But was the mischief confined to Ireland? Could the system be mischievous in Ireland, and the reverse in England? Was political agitation a baneful thing in the Conciliation Hall of Dublin, and could it be a beneficial and a wholesome thing in the Free Trade Hall of Manchester? Had they found themselves under the necessity, after enduring twenty years of political agitation in Ireland, at last to put it down by the strong hand—to enact coercive laws—to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act, in order to cope with these dangerous principles? Was it necessary to put down agitation in Ireland, with the strong hand, while in England everything was to be handed over to the tender mercies of club law? Were they to allow club law to be established in England?—for they might give it what name they pleased—Anti-Corn Law League, Financial Reform, Repeal Associations, or the ten or twenty different names by which clubs were designated in Paris. But they were all substantially of the same character—they were all political clubs, coercing, or attempting to coerce, the movements of Government, or exercising a baneful influence upon liberty, upon order, and upon the progress and well-being of the country. They had found it necessary to put down the clubs in Ireland. The French Government had been obliged to put down the clubs in Paris. He told them three or four years ago, during the debates on the corn laws, that the evil of the club system was an evil that the Government of the country, sooner or later, must grapple with; and he now told the noble Lord, that either he, or some other Minister in his place, must ere long, grapple with the evil of political clubs in England. He would not trespass further upon their attention, but he would give his cordial support to the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Buckinghamshire, because he thought it was no more than was due to the feelings and interests of two great sections of the community whom Her Majesty's Ministers had entirely passed over in the Speech from the Throne.

Mr. MONCKTON MILNES said, he did not think he should accommodate himself to the spirit of the debate by following his hon. Friend the Member for Northamptonshire either through his discussions on the corn law or the Irish Poor Law. He had himself been in one of the smallest minorities ever seen in the House on the question that the words "1st of February, 1849," be omitted from the measure which settled that law; and while he considered the question now as finally disposed of as one of protection, he trusted it would always be considered open as one of revenue. With regard to the question of the Irish Poor Law, which the Irish Members had pressed so much, he trusted that Her Majesty's Government would do all they could to settle that question without loss of time. He had hoped, when he saw the hon. Member for Northamptonshire rise, that it was for the purpose of telling the House that, after the speech of the noble Lord at the head of the Government, he thought it would be no longer just in the Opposition to persist in pressing their Amendment. He had hoped so, because an Amendment of this kind, brought forward by one who, he presumed, was now the recognised leader of the Opposition, was, in fact, of a very serious and solemn nature, and one which they would hardly have been justified in taking so hastily, even if we had actually been plunged into a Continental war, or if every kind of misfortune had accumulated on the head of the country by the imprudence of Government. But when the charges upon which the Amendment professed to be founded, had been proved to be erroneous, he really thought the Opposition would not do justice to themselves with the country, if they persisted in so grave a censure upon Her Majesty's Government. It either ought to be persisted in with a spirit of continuous animosity, with which he did not think they were prepared, or else the Opposition ought to accept the noble Lord's proposition to discuss the questions as they came separately before the House. What had Her Majesty's Government done that this signal charge should be brought against them? The hon. Member for Buckinghamshire gave them last night an application of the phrase of Chancellor Oxenstiern; and he might follow that up by asking, if the House did not think that the hon. Gentleman had given them abundant proof with how little information a violent attack might be made upon a Government? For he had never seen his hon. Friend draw more largely upon the redundant sources of his fancy, or find so little foundation for his charges in matters of fact. Upon all the subjects on which he had touched, he could know no more than any other hon. Member; and yet the unhesitating confidence with which he put forward his various charges against the Government, should only have proceeded from the strongest proofs and the clearest information. He did not think that the Opposition would do full credit to the position which they held in the country, if on those statements which had now been set right —if on those assertions which were proved to be wrong last night in another place, they still persisted in this grave censure upon Her Majesty's Government. He thought, also, that it was not consistent with the general character of the Opposition last Session; and it would be a sign that the Government ought no longer to expect that moderation and justice from their opponents, many instances of which formerly occurred. The charges appeared to him to resolve themselves chiefly to an attack upon the management of foreign affairs. The Opposition did indeed assume that large classes in this country were in a state of distress; but he was, on the other hand, of opinion, that trade was improving; and he was certainly of opinion, that the agriculture of the country had not received any such injury from the scale of prices hitherto experienced as would justify any deductions from the repeal of the duty upon imported corn. There was one point on which the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire seemed to have got important information, because he told the

House, contrary certainly to the general impression in the commercial world, that our exports had not been affected by the confusions which took place on the Continent, but that they were as large during the last as they had been during the preceding year. How the hon. Member had found that out, was a mystery to him, for no papers had been laid upon the table; so that either he must have access to some secret sources of information, of which others knew nothing, or else he must have made a very reckless assertion. With regard to the particular facts on foreign affairs, some of these had been set right by the noble Lord, others had been disproved by what passed last night in another place. It was distinctly proved, that the course adopted by Sir William Parker was not in consequence of what hon. Gentlemen opposite called the nonsense of sentimental politics, but that it was dictated by clear humanity, and a just and enlarged policy. The hon. Gentleman had affected to see considerable obscurity in Her Majesty's Speech in its allusions to foreign affairs. It appeared to him, on the other hand, that the allusions were clear and distinct, and that Her Majesty, in congratulating them upon the suspension of arms in the north and south of Europe, referred distinctly to the suspension of arms between Denmark and Germany, and between Austria and Sardinia. But without entering into details upon the question, he would presume to call upon the House to beware, before they condemned in this solemn manner—for the Amendment before them meant condemnation if it meant anything at all—before they condemned the peaceful policy of Her Majesty's Ministers. It was, above all, important they should keep in mind that the conduct of Her Majesty's Minister for Foreign Affairs had been one continued and successful effort to preserve the peace of Europe in difficult and perilous times; and he had a right to call upon the people of England to accept his conduct in that sense. It had been a great object of mirth to his Friend the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire that there was a Universal Peace Society established in this country; and he asked the noble Lord at the head of the Government whether he was acting in co-operation with the Universal Peace Society? Now, though he (Mr. Milnes) did not indulge in the same hopes which the amiable enthusiasts composing that society indulged in, yet he believed that there was in this country, and to an extent of which hon. Gentlemen opposite were little aware, a conviction of the strongest and most intimate kind respecting the wickedness, the uselessness, the abomination of war. He believed that the animus displayed by the Finance Reform Association towards our military establishments had been much influenced by this feeling. This was not simply from humane and Christian emotions, but there was a growing conviction among the people of this country that, if statesmen chose it, and if they would set their minds to it, then, not perhaps every war, or every act of violence, might be avoided, but that by far the greater part of the contests which had desolated the world might have been settled by means of peaceful mediation. Now it was in deep sympathy with this feeling that his noble Friend the Foreign Secretary had conscientiously acted; and this, he thought, was the fault of the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire, that he had carefully concealed throughout the whole course of his speech that but for the very acts which he had blamed as leading to war—that but for these very acts war on the Continent could not have been avoided. It was probable, for instance, at Naples, if the mediation of Admiral Baudin had alone been employed, that the Neapolitan Government might have assumed an attitude of hostility towards the French Admiral. And what then would have been the case, in the temper of the French people? He thought, in such a case, it would have been improbable that hostilities would be avoided. He came now to another question — the arresting of the war—because war had been arrested when the Austrian army was stopped on the borders of Sardinia by French and English mediation. If, with the rights and passions of a conqueror, Marshal Radetzky had attempted to occupy Turin, there could not be a doubt that a French army would have passed the Alps, and how, then, could a general war have been avoided? Then take the case of Germany and Denmark. Did they not all know—he did not mean diplomatists merely, but all who took an interest in the question—that behind Denmark there stood that great Power which had held its position during the late troubles in silence, but which always stood ready to meet Germany on the shores of Denmark. These, then, were the risks which his noble Friend had to meet; and if he had not in all of them completely succeeded, were they, therefore, to say that the principles of his interference were unjust, or that the attempt ought never to have been made? It might be that in a short time few traces would remain of these attempts at negotiation. It was possible that hostilities might be renewed between Naples and Sicily; and he would say it was not at all improbable that the conduct of Her Majesty's Opposition on this occasion might be the means of preventing a settlement of this very question, and might lead to an internecine war between the two countries. They, the more powerful party in another place, who maintained that the policy of the noble Lord was unjust, how did they know that on their heads would not rest the guilt of having renewed those hostilities? Hon. Gentlemen opposite too well knew the history of the Sicilian people not to remember the tragedies that had been acted by them against those whom they considered their invaders and oppressors; and perhaps another Sicilian Vespers had been prevented by his noble Friend, but might now be repeated. The hon. Member for Radnorshire had spoken in very light terms of the bombardment of Messina; but the hon. Member should recollect that bombardments had, by general consent, been abandoned by nearly the whole of the civilised world. And the reason for that was obvious—when armies met in the field they were usually fairly matched, and equally prepared for destruction; but when a town was bombarded, the cannoneer, who discharged the ball, knew not where it would alight, whether on the guilty or the unoffending—on men, women, or children. It was this that made the bombardment of Messina and Vienna the outstanding horrors of the last year, because an enormous number of persons were slain who took no part in the acts for which the punishment was required. They were informed that a congress was about to meet on the affairs of Italy. He must confess, he had no great hope from the decisions of that congress, because he observed that many politicians of all parties looked upon Austrian domination in Italy as a power which it would not be desirable, even if it were easy, to remove. He held a different opinion. He had resided many years in the countries in question, and he had come away from the Lombardo-Venetian kingdom with the conviction that the military occupation of those beautiful countries by strangers, and their retention by an unsympathetic and ungenial Government, could not remain long without causing dissension and revolt. Admitting the fact that that military occupation was in itself a right thing, he had very little charge to bring against the Austrian Government. The Austrian government of Lombardy had been made the frequent subject of eulogy in that House; but he must express his conviction—and he wished to do so in the most serious manner — that, so long as the Austrian occupation of the Lombardo-Venetian kingdoms lasted, there was no security for the peace of Europe. Nothing was more certain than that the Lombardo-Venetian kingdom was determined to get rid of the Austrian Government, and that that feeling was equally shared by all classes in the community—by the nobleman, the gentleman, the peasant, and the artisan; and this although the difficulties were now much greater than they had been. He doubted whether any means of conciliation were possible between these contending nations; for a most cruel and iron rule now kept down the people, and Austria was now carrying out the principle of establishing a second Poland in the midst of Europe. If, after twenty-five years of occupation, the Austrian Government had made not one single step towards conciliation—if all the officers of the Government were German, either because of the unwillingness of the Italians to fill them, or the unwillingness of the Germans to allow them to be so filled —if the two nations still stood in hostile attitudes to each other, so that there wanted only the late concurrence of favourable circumstances to induce the people to rise against their oppressors—how much more difficult would be the task of conciliation now? It was by confiscating the property of the great noblemen, and declaring that force, and force alone, should be the maxim of the Government, that Austria now retained power in Lombardy; and, therefore, it was, that, under these circumstances, the peace of Europe would not be secured so long as that state of things continued. Poland was surrounded by ungenial Powers, who remembered their injustice to her. There was no reason to suppose that those Powers would rise in her defence. The case of Lombardy was different. On all sides except one she had a sympathising and homogeneous population; and, therefore, he did not think, under all the circumstances, that the proposed congress would lead to any good advantage. They all knew the circumstances under which Austria had again occupied Milan. If Marshal Radetzky had shown any desire for conciliation — if he had acted upon the principle of securing a federal constitution for the Austrian dominions, and shown a disposition that all might be forgiven and forgotten—then indeed there might have been some hope. He did not, however, presume to say that Marshal Radetzky would have been right in so doing; for he doubted much whether any principles of conciliation could have been adopted. But, at all events, he had not done so. The questions of foreign policy were, he knew, so little regarded in the House, that he should not have ventured to enlarge upon them at so much length if he had not felt it right at the present moment that as many hon. Members as possible should try to prevent the practical evils which he feared might result by the adoption by any large majority of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire. That hon. Member had a peculiar way of regarding all these subjects; and considering how large a field there was for discussion, and how little the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire was in want of subjects for display, it would have been more gratifying had he taken up some other subject for jest besides that of the great constitutional struggles of large portions of Europe. When he (Mr. Milnes) heard an Englishman, a descendant of men who had fought, struggled, and suffered for liberty, speaking contemptuously and jestingly of the people of Europe who were now struggling and suffering, he did feel that that man, in some degree, and in so far as his expressions went, showed that he was unworthy of the rights he enjoyed. The hon. Member had made extreme mirth, too, of what he called the sentimental matters connected with race, and said that all those notions about people being unwilling to live under the same Government, because they were of different races, were very absurd. Now, he (Mr. Milnes) never pretended that people of different races might not be amalgamated under one Government; but a man must have read history to little advantage if he excluded the influence of races altogether from these considerations. But what must be thought by those — and many Members of that House should be classed amongst them—who had read with very great pleasure the works of the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire—works in which the difference of race was laid down as the sole motive and cause by which the whole social system of the world was moved? Surely they could not have listened to his speech of the previous night, without feeling that he was at least guilty of some inconsistency. It was curious that there should be such a difference between the literary and political character of a man. And when he (Mr. Milnes) looked upon the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire as the author who had drawn the character of Sidonia, and as the politician who had chosen the subject of distinction of race as one of contempt and ridicule, he could only say that it was a singular instance of what he might be permitted to call a double identity, almost claiming the attention of the physiologist. He would now only detain the House whilst he offered an observation upon that portion of Her Majesty's Speech in which She recommended a reduction in the expenditure; and, in doing so, he should say that the question of financial reform was one which it was too much the fashion to allege was forced upon the attention of Her Majesty's Government solely by the Financial League of Manchester. But it should be remembered, that almost as soon as Her Majesty's Government came into office, they expressed their desire to accede to a system of financial reform and reduction, and they proceeded to collect around them such persons as were likely to enable them to carry such projects into effect. By the appointment of those important Committees last year, they gave proof of the sincerity of their intentions with regard to the question of financial reform, and now the assertion that they only acted under pressure came, to say the least, with a very bad grace from those hon. Gentlemen some of whom had been Members of the former Government, which had done so little in that direction. He should rather think that support had been given to Her Majesty's Government by the agitation of the question; and he (Mr. Milnes) could not agree with those hon. Gentlemen who thought that public agitation on this subject was either detrimental to the interests of the country, or injurious to the constitution. As to the latter point, they had been getting too much into the habit lately of calling anything they did not like unconstitutional. When hon. Gentlemen opposite disapproved of some of the measures proposed by those on his side of the House, they directly denounced them as unconstitutional. When, again, they, in turn, advocated certain systems uncongenial to the Gentlemen on his side, the term was reciprocated. He had no particular objection to the phrase, only he should like to see its uses defined and limited. As for the present agitation being unconstitutional, the people took a great interest in the question, and they were meeting together to express their opinions upon it in the mode permitted by the constitution. As to the fear of any confusion or disturbance arising from such an agitation, the people of England were quite clearheaded enough to see and know that confusion and the disturbance of public order were very dear. He believed it had been a matter of arithmetical calculation with them. He believed they had calculated, even to some nicety, how much the attempt to create confusion in the early months of the last year had cost the nation at large, and the result of their calculations was, that they thought order the cheapest and best mode of action. With regard to the comparisons instituted by hon. Gentlemen opposite, the present agitation was as little analogous to the clubs of Paris as it was possible to conceive. The League itself was formed by some six or seven gentlemen meeting in a private room and talking together, and at length getting a vast multitude of people assembled to support their views. Yes, and he thought that was the safest and best means of agitating a public question. He thought it was by such means they avoided those disturbances that had shaken other countries, and that they brought about, without confusion, those constitutional changes which they desired. It was thus that the people of England were enabled to enjoy internal peace and the blessings of government with a constitutional Sovereign, with an unoppressive Church, and a Parliament that, in the main, represented the interests of the people.

Viscount MANDEVILLE supported the Amendment. Our interference in Sicily might have been warranted by our connexion with that country, particularly in 1812, but he could not but agree in the condemnation which had been pronounced by the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire on the conduct pursued by the British Government with reference to Austria and the States of Lombardy. The most important of the many omissions in the Speech—not one of which had been satisfactorily explained by the noble Lord—was that it did not contain one word as to the condition of the agricultural interest in this country. Next to that was the absence of any allusion to the state of the colonies. He thought that our colonial interests, having no representatives in that House, were more especially entitled to their care, and demanded every possible support, for they were as much the offspring of the State as any other part of the empire. Instead of having protected, this country had injured her colonies by legislation. There was nothing heard but complaints from every colonial possession, and every account that reached this country conveyed some fresh intelligence of distress and suffering, of estates abandoned and lying waste, of buildings out of repair, of labourers flocking into the towns for work and food, and of destitution so great that in some cases the people had made houses of packing-cases. These were subjects on which he thought the Government owed some explanation of their views to the House.

Mr. HORSMAN said, that the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire, in moving his Amendment, had adopted a course that prevented many hon. Gentleman from giving a mere formal assent to the Address, and the discussion had turned upon matters involving questions so important that he for his own part felt unwilling to give his vote without drawing a distinction between those portions of the Address to which he could cordially give his assent, and those to which he thought there was some objections. The hon. Member for Buckinghamshire in moving his Amendment had entered at great length into all those questions of political and commercial policy which had agitated the public mind of late, and had entered into the history of all the legislative measures discussed during the last few years, going particularly into the question of free trade, to which he had given his constant opposition, and respecting which he had, at the time of its discussion, pronounced many predictions. The hon. Member had proceeded to show that the experience of the last three years had fully verified those predictions which he had made, and having gone into statistical details, and exhibited his view of our financial and commercial condition, proving all that he wished to the satisfaction of the party with which he was connected, he very consistently concluded his speech by moving an Amendment in accordance with the statement which he had made. The last paragraph of that Amendment stated "that a large portion of the agricultural and colonial interests of the empire are labouring under a state of progressive depression, calculated to excite serious apprehension and anxiety." He (Mr. Horsman) was sure that the hon. Gentleman did not mean to disguise the conclusion that, if it were admtited that the state of depression in agricultural interests existed, it was connected intimately with the passing of those free-trade measures from which he predicted such fatal results in 1846. If, therefore, he (Mr. Horsman) voted for that paragraph, he should do so in opposition to all his previously expressed opinions, and he should be supposed to retract all the sentiments which he had avowed in 1846. Now that was a step he was not prepared to take. In the course of the last year it was admitted that the legislation of 1846 had saved the country from great perils, and he expected that in future years they would derive great advantages from free trade. Another paragraph in the Amendment set forth, that "neither our relations with foreign Powers, nor the state of the revenue, nor the condition of the manufacturing interests, were such as to justify us in addressing Her Majesty in the language of congratulation." But, as the noble Lord had justly observed, the Speech did not ask the House to indulge in the language of congratulation. This paragraph, therefore, must be taken in connexion with that portion of the hon. Gentleman's speech in which he condemned strongly the system of "unwise economy" to which the Government, not from statesmanlike motives, but, as he hinted, from less creditable influences, were become subservient. If, then, he (Mr. Horsman) were to concur in that portion of the Amendment, he must be supposed to assent to those doctrines, and to express his disapproval of the diminished estimates and reduced expenditure promised in the Speech from the Throne. However the Amendment might be in accordance with the views of the hon. Member's party, it was one which he (Mr. Horsman) could not consistently support. He could not vote for any proposition which would carry with it the conclusion that he was adverse to reduced expenditure; for he hailed with satisfaction any promise of it, and certainly he must say there was nothing in the announcement of the expected retrenchment as set forth in the noble Lord's speech last night, calculated to excite any very serious apprehensions among the opponents of financial reform. Let the principle be once introduced, however, and it must be carried out still further. He was grateful for the principle being acceded to in any shape. He thought the aspect of affairs on the Continent was such as to justify reduction. This time last year they were told that France was the volcano from which the eruption was to lay all Europe in ashes. Now in France they saw that, amidst all the conflict of theories, one practical object was pursued by all. There was a popular movement swelling into an agitation in favour of a reduction of the army. Every man of note addressing public assemblies — every man who courted popularity, had declared himself the friend of that reduction. From the President of the Republic down to the humblest citizen who addressed a public meeting, they were agreed on that point. And the Marshal of France under whose care the army was placed at present had consented to a reduction of from one fourth to one-third of the whole force. The noble Lord who moved the Address on the preceding night, gave great credit to the Governments of the Continent because they had kept the populations from war. He (Mr. Horsman) did not think the noble Lord did justice to the people. He believed that the popular feeling was against war, and that the Governments had rather followed the national sentiment than led it. As to the reductions about to be made, if he accepted the noble Lord's invitation, and rejected the arbitrary standard of 1835, he trusted the noble Lord would not prop ineffective measures by a recourse to conventionalities and sham inapplicable to 1849. He (Mr. Horsman) concurred in a good deal that had been said regarding our foreign relations. He could not conceive it possible that any hon. Gentleman in the House could say that our foreign relations were altogether satisfactory. He thought no hon. Gentleman could maintain that our position with regard to foreign Powers was either satisfactory to Parliament or creditable to the country. But he could not allow the blame of that position to be cast entirely upon this or that Minister, when he felt that a great deal of it was owing to Parliament itself. He thought that the way in which they permitted the business of the Foreign Office to be carried on was a disgrace to them. There was a system of secrecy and irresponsibility in the mode of conducting the foreign business which was most reprehensible. The people of England knew nothing about what the Foreign Secretary was doing; and if, on any point of interest, a question was put, the answer was ready—"the public interests require the public to be kept in ignorance." Or if entire secrecy was impossible, from such an explosion as took place last year in Spain, when, as the hon. Member for Buckingham expressed it, our Minister was kicked out of Madrid, some explanatory documents being necessarily presented to Parliament, it is discovered that the business of our Foreign Office was carried on by two sets of despatches, one for the use of our Ministers abroad, and another for the amusement of Parliament at home. The House was obliged to take whatever the Minister for Foreign Affairs was pleased to give; and as his pleasure only extended to giving such papers as had already been published in foreign journals, the House was not much wiser for his communications. And then the hon. Member for Pontefract told them that the people of England took no interest in foreign affairs. There were two fallacies involved in that assertion. The people took no interest in that upon which they were denied all knowledge. How could they? Would a man who knew there was a treasure locked up within an iron door spend his time in trying to look through it? Our Foreign Office was closed with an iron door, through which no glimpse could be caught of what was going on within; and people, therefore, took no interest in it. But they turned to that which they could see and understand; and they were beginning to find there was an invasion which they dreaded more than any chance of foreign armies. They had learned that the worst invasion they could have was that of the tax-gatherer. But the people of this country must take an interest in every question which affected their pockets. It had been laid down as a constitutional maxim by the English people that publicity was the best, if not the only guarantee for good government. If that held good in domestic, it equally held good in foreign affairs. Nations now-a-days had no secrets from each other. They knew the precise resources, power, and even the intentions of their neighbours. They valued at a lower rate than in times gone by the arts of political rivalry. They knew the danger, the uncertainty, and the cost of diplomatic triumphs. Had the system of secrecy worked well? It was a costly system. It was one under which they had had the long existence of peace without its advantages, and had maintained the costly establishments of war without its termination. There was one remarkable deviation from the rule of former times, in the Speech from the Throne, on which he should offer some observations. In the opening Speech of last year, Her Majesty had told them of Her confidence in the continuance of peace. At the close of the Session, She only expressed Her hope that peace would continue. That hope had diminished, and there was nothing but a desire for peace before them now. That was a paragraph which, he thought, was always prepared with great care, and if the expression were altered with design, it was calculated to create uneasiness. He could hardly believe it to be accidental. Was there a single Court in Europe with which they were on cordial terms? Several there were with which, if the bare civilities of diplomatic intercourse were not altogether interrupted, they were with difficulty sustained. By what fatal ingenuity was it, that after thirty-four years of peace, and with a concurrence of events calculated to strengthen our relations of amity, and our influence in Europe, our Queen should be compelled to depart from the forms which Her predecessors had used, and so lead the House to think that She had not met with those royal courtesies which Her predecessors had enjoyed? He did not say that it was attributable to one Minister more than to another, but he could not but regret that the ancient principle of non-intervention, which was supposed to be the groundwork of our foreign policy, had been departed from. Instead of intervention in the affairs of foreign Powers being the exception, it had become the rule of our policy; and that, too, without the appearance of being guided by any fixed principle. In one country we interfered on behalf of the Crown. The very next year we interfered, in another, on behalf of the revolted subjects of a Monarch, to prevent the Crown from reducing them to allegiance. And thus we had disappointed both parties, and gained the hostility of both. One hated us for going too far—another for not going far enough. We had meddled everywhere, and we were detested everywhere, and wherever we meddled most, there we were most detested. All the other departments of Government had been made patent to the public, and the restraint thus exercised upon them had proved most salutary; the proceedings of the Foreign Office alone were wrapped in mystery. In the Speech from the Throne, they were promised that certain diplomatic documents connected with this department would be laid before the House. But when? Why, when the "interests of the public service would permit." In other words—when all interest in the matters in question had ceased—when they had gone by, and when nobody cared whether the documents connected with them were perfect or not. Now, the House ought to take care that the public mind was not kept in a state of ignorance relative to these questions. No hon. Member would move for the papers in question, because such a Motion would have a personal application, and would, indeed, imply a degree of censure upon the Government. At the same time, no one could doubt but that, if more publicity were to be thrown on these transactions, the change would be greatly for the advantage of the country. When the general policy of a Minister was in the right direction, he would be greatly strengthened, public opinion sustaining him; while, if the reverse were the case, the national interests would be promoted by the restraints which public opinion, freely exercised upon what came within its knowledge, would necessarily impose. But the vices of the secret system were not altogether confined to the Foreign Department. There was another department to which they applied to a great extent—he meant that of the colonies. The misgovernment which characterised that department harassed our colonies and hazarded their allegiance. It was to him a matter of surprise—if, indeed, anything could surprise him relative to the omissions in the Royal Speech—that throughout the whole of that Speech there was not a single allusion to our colonial empire. One would suppose, indeed, judging from the document in question, that we had no colonial empire at all, or at all events that it was in such a state of blessed prosperity as not to require even a passing remark. Now, he doubted if there ever was a time when our colonial possessions were in a more unsatisfactory, and in some respects a more dangerous, condition than they were at the present moment. He doubted if there ever was a time when there existed more distress in not a few of our colonies—more discontent—and something worse than discontent in others. They knew the vast interests which were involved in these colonial matters—they knew how questions pertaining to them had lately been discussed in Parliament—and yet here was the whole subject passed over without a single remark, and that, too, while there was scarcely a paragraph in the Speech which could have failed to remind its framers of the condition of those possessions which they were thus consigning to utter neglect. They were told in the Speech that everything in Her Majesty's dominions was in a state of progressive improvement. Did that assertion apply to the colonies? They were told that commerce was reviving. Did that assertion apply to the colonies? They were told also that tranquillity subsisted in all their dominions. Was that the case in the colonies? Was it true that there was perfect tranquillity throughout our colonial possessions? They were promised retrenchment and economy; but did that promise refer to our colonial possessions? From the first line of the Speech to the last, there was not a single paragraph which was not belied by the condition of our colonial empire. These, then, were the circumstances under which that empire was utterly passed over in a Speech from the Throne. The omission took place, let it be observed, at a time when they saw, in the correspondence which passed between the colonial government at home and the colonial government abroad, nothing but a mass of confusion, strife, and blunder, absolutely without example. Governor Grey, in Jamaica, was furiously scolded by Earl Grey in Downing-street; while Earl Grey, in Downing-street, was convicted of ignorance and temerity by another Governor Grey in New Zealand. There was a threatening of the stoppage of supplies in one colony; there existed martial law and military executions to an appalling extent in another; there was wide-spread ruin and distress in most. Such were the appalling circumstances under which the colonies had been passed over without notice in the Speech from the Throne. The hon. Member for the West Riding (Mr. Cobden) had been charged with undervaluing our colonies.—with a feeling of indifference whether our colonial possessions were altogether given up or lost to this country. But he must say he did not think, under the circumstances in which the colonies were now placed, that there had ever been an enemy to British connexion who had shown such blindness, such contempt, with regard to them, as the Minister who, in the Queen's Speech, not only exempted them from an expression of Royal sympathy, but also, by implication, excepted them as a part of Her Majesty's dominions. He had now only to record his protest against that system of secrecy and irresponsibility which, in both the departments which he had mentioned, was fatal to the proper administration of affairs. He hoped that Parliament would feel called upon to exercise a more constitutional vigilance regarding them; for in a constitutional Government publicity was the only guarantee for good government; and unless Parliament adopted measures to enforce that publicity, he had a strong feeling that it was neglecting its duty.

MR. F. SCOTT was astonished how, after the able and convincing speech of the hon. Gentleman, he could make up his mind to oppose the Amendment. For his own part, he thought that the Royal Speech pointed very clearly to the propriety of several reductions in our national expenses. It seemed to him that if, as was to be inferred from that Speech, we had no foreign relations, that we could and ought to bring down our diplomatic expenditure to a great extent. As for the Foreign Office and the Colonial Office, there was, he believed, this distinction between them—that the former had two sets of despatches, one meant to be seen, and the other secret, while the other had only one set, which it was very difficult to procure entire. Altogether, he regarded the mischief done by the Colonial Office system as greater than that springing from the department of Foreign Affairs. It was certainly to be regretted that there was not on that occasion any Gentleman on the Treasury bench connected with the Colonial Department, to tell the House on what grounds the Government had conducted themselves so strangely with regard to the colonies, and why all reference to our colonial system of government had been omitted in the Speech from the Throne. He trusted, however, that the hon. Gentleman who presided over that department would explain, not merely to that House, but to the country and to the colonies of the British empire throughout the world, why it was that, upon this most important of all occasions, and in the present most critical period in our colonial history, our colonies were not even mentioned in the Royal Speech. Like most other Speeches from the Throne, the present was so very vague and general, that it never condescended upon a fact without greatly qualifying it, while sometimes the qualifications amounted to an actual contradiction. Thus, the first fact he found stated was, that a British Admiral was a humane man, while in the same breath they were informed that his humanity was of no avail. The second fact was, that a rebellion of a formidable character had broken out in one part of India, while at the same time they were told that the rest of our Oriental empire remained undisturbed; and the third fact was, that while one part of this country was prosperous and tranquil, another portion was suffering and disaffected. The Speech proclaimed Her Majesty's desire to maintain friendly relations with foreign States; but it would have been more satisfactory to the country if Her Majesty had been enabled to say that foreign States were desirous of maintaining friendly relations with Her. As it had been in the matter of free trade, so in this, the reciprocity was all on one side. After this country had relaxed the burdens upon commerce, they found foreign countries only the more anxious to maintain and increase existing burdens; so in political matters, when Great Britain desired to manifest friendly feelings to foreign Powers, those Powers exhibited no desire to reciprocate the feeling. The House was told towards the conclusion of the last Session, that the colonies cost this country between 3,000,000*l.* and 4,000,000*l.* annually; and that expenditure was mainly caused by their giving up the entire management of those colonies to a sort of Star Chamber council sitting in Downing-street. The management of these dependencies was as little under the control of the House of Commons as if no Parliament existed. Some of them might have their legislative assemblies; but they were so crippled in their functions, so restricted in the management of their own affairs, that they might be said to have only a right to complain of their grievances, without having the power of redressing them. And how were these constitutions granted? The rule which seemed to guide the Colonial Office in granting a legislature to a colony was, that there should be a rebellion on its part, and an expenditure on ours of 2,000,000*l.* or so. Was this principle to be carried out? It appeared so. There had been an insurrection at the Cape, for which we had paid a bill of two millions, and were likely to have to pay one of another. Thus the Cape had qualified itself for a constitution; and, indeed, he believed that one similar to that given to Canada had been sent out, the Colonial Government probably thinking that what suited the latitude of Quebec, would suit the latitude of Cape Town. He deprecated the whole system under which the colonies were entrusted, without restraint, to the tender mercies of Downing-street. If the colonies were governed more upon the principles of kindness and affection, we should find a considerable reduction in the expenditure. An omission of any expression of interest in our American colonies, and the system of leaving them to statesmen who did not inform the people of their measures, eighty years ago, led to the dismemberment of the British empire, and he feared that the same causes were likely again to produce similar results; that was, if they did not take warning in time, and give the colonies the advantage of free and responsible government. Her Majesty, in the Speech from the Throne, spoke of the loyalty of the people; but he hoped that they would not test the loyalty of their colonial fellow-subjects too far. They wanted economy—they wanted security — security against reckless colonial expenditure, and security for good government. They wanted security against the vagaries of the Colonial Office, which instead of keeping up an even current of policy, was perpetually changing and shifting that policy, rearing up constitutions one year which were overturned the next, and administering the affairs entrusted to its charge on no fixed or intelligible principle. The hon. Gentleman concluded by expressing his determination to support the Amendment.

COLONEL SIBTHORP contrasted the admirable speech of the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire with the Jesuitical, the weak and imperfect reply of the noble Lord at the head of the Government. He admired the one as much as he despised the other. As for the Queen's Speech, it was not a speech from the Queen, but a mere *omnium gatherum* pie, concocted by Her Ministers. It was, politically speaking, a falsehood throughout, for which any Ministry deserved to be impeached. Let them examine the document closely, and he would venture to say there was nothing in it good, nothing favourable, nothing consoling to the country. On the contrary, like other productions of the same authors, it was full of underhand work, deceit, and unworthy trickery. It was always painful to him to make use of strong language; but he should never shrink from expressing his sentiments, nor from acting up to them. They were told of papers which were to be laid before the House; but when? Did they recollect the mutilated despatches of last year? Alas! the noble Lord who then exposed the Government, had been taken from amongst them, and could no longer apply the lash as he had done, when he made the noble Lord the Member for the city of London shake in his seat with the consciousness of his misconduct. But the question was, when were they to get the papers which were promised? He hoped they would come at an earlier period, and in better shape than last year. In any case, however, he would have little reliance on them. The hon. and gallant Member proceeded to state his objections to a reduction of the Army. He heard that two regiments of cavalry, the 8th Hussars, and the 12th Lancers, were to be sent to the Punjaub. Did that appear to denote a state of things in which a reduction of our military power would be politic? No. What he wanted was, to see a reduction made in the salaries of the too fat, too highly fed, and too lazy Ministers. The Whigs had come in on the principle of retrenchment; but they had never practised it. It was stated that the revenue had improved. If that were so—if his right hon. relative the Chancellor of the Exchequer would show him that the revenue was in so prosperous a state as the Speech represented it to be—then he would ask him, in the name of the people of England, whether they would continue the income-tax, and repeal the present most unjust tax upon fire insurances? But the Whigs throughout their policy were endeavouring to raise the foreigner and degrade their own country. He confessed that, as that Government was at present constituted, he could not even support a measure emanating from it, which should bear the stamp of justice, lest there should be some sinister purpose lurking beneath, which would convert the boon into a curse.

SIR DE LACY EVANS trusted, that the Government would immediately commence the revision and more equal partition of the taxation which bore upon the country; and that they would not forget the legacy duty, which pressed most unequally on different descriptions of property. Adverting to the foreign policy of the Government, and the speech of the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire, he confessed that he regarded the address of the hon. Member, sparkling and amusing as it was, rather as a parody on, than a grave statement of, the facts with which it professed to deal. For his own part he (Sir De Lacy Evans) was disposed to support the foreign policy of the noble Viscount, who had succeeded in maintaining the peace of Europe, and had espoused the cause of liberty in every country with which we had relations. Seventeen or eighteen years ago, when the noble Foreign Secretary came into office, the right hon. Member for Stamford (Mr. Herries) predicted that he would not keep the peace of the empire for six months. But we found, that during that period of seventeen or eighteen years, the peace of Europe had been preserved, and that much had been done for the cause of constitutional government. During the past year, no department of the State had been more severely taxed than the department for Foreign Affairs. He rejoiced at the spirit of cordiality which Her Majesty's Government had manifested in their relations with France; and he believed that the peace of the world could not be better preserved than by maintaining those relations in the same spirit of cordiality and good-will.

CAPTAIN HARRIS said, that he could not support the Address, because he believed that every paragraph it contained was wanting in sincerity. He confessed that he felt the greatest astonishment at what he could not help calling the effrontery of the Government, when he found them congratulating Parliament on the condition of this empire at a time when a cry of despair, mingled with angry remonstrance, was proceeding from our West India colonies in consequence of the misery which the policy of the Government had created there, and at a time when the agricultural interest in this country was exposed to great and unusual suffering —the harvest in the southern and western and some of the midland counties having been almost swept away by a continuous and unprecedented deluge, whilst the markets were swamped by the arrival of foreign grain. He knew that a fair trial must be given to the free-trade experiment, before the public, excited as they had been on the subject, could come to a fair conclusion; but in the mean time the agricultural interest had a right to ask for relief from those burdens and unjust assessments to which they were subjected. It was to this grievance, universally recognised, that he would presume to call the undivided attention of the country party, and more especially of those Gentlemen whose ability and knowledge of the subject made them competent to deal with it. The noble Lord the Prime Minister had, in a letter written to Her Majesty, December 20, 1845, which he had read to this House, made use of the following words:—

> "Lord John Russell would have formed his Ministry on the basis of a complete free trade in corn, to be established at once without gradation or delay. He would have accompanied that proposal with measures of relief to a considerable extent, of the occupiers of land from the burdens to which they are subjected."

Free trade in corn was established; and, the noble Lord in office, they had a right to call on him to make good his words. With regard to the revenue, they had very few statistical details to assist them in forming a judgment; but, as far as he could learn, there was nothing to warrant the expressions of satisfaction contained in the Speech with respect to the flourishing state of the commercial interest, for, with the exception of cotton and bread stuffs, every branch of manufacture exhibited a decrease. It was, in fact, free trade for a particular interest only which had been tried, and not fair free trade there, for whilst those connected with that interest agitated the country to repeal the duties on corn, to increase their intercourse with America, and thereby better themselves, duties on cotton and woollen manufactures, equally necessaries of life to the poor man, were retained. Free trade, properly so called, was impossible in this country; for under such a system it would be impossible to pay the national debt, and maintain the national credit. The nearest approach to free trade which could with prudence be adopted, was that made by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth, in 1842, which was based entirely on a system of revenue. Under that system the Customs, up to the year 1845, yielded 24,000,000*l*. of revenue, whilst since that time they had decreased 2,500,000*l*. And why? Because in 1846 the right hon. Baronet had allowed his judgment to be disturbed, and his fears to be excited, and, throwing himself into the arms of the hon. Gentleman opposite, the Member for the West Riding, very nearly accomplished the ruin of this country. After the able treatment which the subject had received at the hands of the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire, he would not discuss the foreign policy of this country, but he certainly should not feel satisfied till he saw the papers. One word respecting the proposed reduction in the Army and Navy, He could not help adverting to the inconsistency of these propositions with the recognition of the insurrectionary spirit existing in Ireland, and the war in the Punjaub. For his own part, he thought that if they wished to maintain the peace of Europe, it would always be a prudent course in this country to measure her forces in some degree by those maintained by France. The naval force afloat of the one, should balance in strength the established army of the other; and he would call the attention of the noble Lord to the fact, that the reduction of the French army, according to the plan of General Lamoricière, was not a *bonâ fide* one. The reduced men were still to keep the numbers of their regiments, to be drilled once a year, and hold themselves liable to be called to active service. He had no objection to wholesome reductions, but anything like those proposed by the hon. Member for the West Riding, must at some future period entail enormous expense on this country. With regard to the Navigation Laws, they would no doubt shortly be put in possession of the intentions of Government; but he could not but remark the moderation of their tone as compared with that of last year, from which he was inclined to hope that they would not this year venture to propose so sweeping a plan. He would certainly resist any plan, the object of which was to tamper with the regulations established for the purpose of fostering the commercial marine of this country, the source from which our Navy drew her strength.

Mr. B. COCHRANE could not agree with the hon. Member for Pontefract in applying the term constitutional struggles to those miserable events which had desolated Europe during the past year. The hon. Member had formerly complained that he could not identify himself with any party; but he could now congratulate himself on having joined the party which might be called "The Mountain" in that House. He did not rise to object to the omission of any allusion in Her Majesty's Speech to the condition and prospects of our colonial possessions; but he must offer a few observations respecting what he deemed to be indications in the Speech from the Throne that Her Majesty's Ministers were about to allow themselves to be influenced by the public agitation out of doors, with respect to the finances of the country. Call them clubs or associations, or whatever name by which they pleased to designate these societies, he (Mr. Cochrane) did say that it was not right for any Government to suffer itself to be swayed or influenced by the threats or the menaces of any party. And why did he (Mr. Cochrane) make use of this language with respect to that association, of which he now saw the prime mover, the hon. Member for the West Riding, in his place in that House? He (Mr. Cochrane) had followed the career of that hon. Member, and must say he had been able to trace, through all his speeches and published declarations, that there was something more meant than mere retrenchment and economy. He (Mr. Cochrane) could discover that it was sought to organise a force in this country which was to override the Legislature and dictate to the British House of Commons. He (Mr. Cochrane) was supported in this view of the matter, because, in 1846 the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cobden) had said, speaking of the subject of taxation—

> "He warned the Ministers and the aristocracy, and the landowners of this country, to beware how they forced upon the nation the question of taxation. Extensive as was the fraud and injustice of the corn-law, he considered that if they examined the subject of taxation for the last hundred and fifty years, they would find as black a case against the landowners. He advised them to beware, unless they wished to provoke another league to rise up on the death of this one. If they wanted another organisation, let the middle classes know how they had been cheated, robbed, and bamboozled in the subject of taxation."

In another speech, delivered on another occasion—and if he were misquoting his words, the hon. Gentleman might correct him—the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cobden) stated—

> "He confessed that he would not pretend to have that respect which some men entertained for successful warriors. The duke (alluding to the Duke of Wellington) was an old man; he was fast passing to the last verge of existence, and might almost be said, without any figure of speech, to be tottering upon the brink of the grave."

This the hon. Gentleman meant was the excuse which he (Mr. Cobden) could readily make for the opinions then expressed by that illustrious individual with respect to the military forces of the country. He (Mr. Cochrane) did say, therefore, that this House had a right, when they knew that another league was now springing up in this country, amidst so many other leagues that had recently desolated Europe with so much bloodshed and misery—he did say that they had a right to examine who the men were that acted as the leaders of that league, and what were their opinions and what their objects. He (Mr. Cochrane) would now allude to the words of another hon. Gentleman — whom he did not see now in his place in that House—while addressing a meeting at Manchester — he referred to the hon. Member for Manchester. He (Mr. Cochrane) was sorry the hon. Gentleman was not present, as it was most important that his language on the occasion should not be misrepresented. The hon. Member (Mr. Bright) said—

> "He did wish the people to be so represented that they might control—that they might control the House of Lords. What was to be done for the future? There was nothing they could wish that was unattainable if the same means were only used; and the people of England had begun to find out that they really had some power."

Such principles as these having been enunciated, that nothing was to be unattainable to this league—that it was to carry everything before it, if not by violence, at least by the aid of such violent declarations of opinions as those he had just cited to the House—he (Mr. Cochrane) did regret that Her Majesty's Ministers should have come down to this House with the pledges of retrenchment and economy they had, because it was a dangerous concession to clamour and menaces—an undue and perilous giving way to a pressure from without. And why did he (Mr. Cochrane) say so? Because, last year, what was the state of the case? There were no revolutions, not one-half the dangers of war that exist at present; and yet there had been no offers like the present, of economy and retrenchment made in the Speech from the Throne of that year. There might now be what some deemed a fair prospect of continued peace; but could any man, looking at the present state of the Continent, pretend to say that such an aspect of affairs was presented as warranted a retrenchment of the character meditated? Retrenchment under such circumstances as the present was not retrenchment, but disarmament. He begged to remind hon. Gentlemen, in the year 1792, Mr. Pitt came down to this House with the strongest prognostications of peace, under circumstances similar to the present, and yet in February of the following year (1793) that celebrated war was declared which had so protracted a duration. Then he (Mr. Cochrane) said that a better motto for the statesmen of this country than "Peace and Retrenchment," was "Peace and Armament;" for he verily believed that the greatest security for the continuance of uninterrupted peace was to be prepared to resist unjust attempts at aggression. His object in rising had not been to enter upon the general question before the House—he merely wished to express his deep regret that Her Majesty's Government had thought proper to yield to any external pressure; and he stood there emphatically to denounce such pusillanimous conduct, even although he should stand alone while he did it.

Mr. BANKES said, the noble Lord at the head of the Government had expressed a wish that the House should not pass a vote of condemnation upon their conduct on the first night of the Session. The condemnation, however, was one charging omission rather than commission, and such a condemnation could only be passed on the first night of the Session. It was said that the Addresses moved on occasions like the present were merely echoes of the Speech from the Throne; but the noble Lord would not deny that these Addresses should be also echoes of the opinions of the people. Now, when they observed the large interests that were at stake, and the large portion of the empire that had been wholly omitted from the Speech, it was the duty of those who represented the opinions of that portion of the people to take notice of these omissions; and the noble Lord might, if he pleased, call that a condemnation on the first night of the Session. He regretted to observe that no allusion to the interests of most important portions of the empire was made in the Speech which had been submitted to the Queen by Her Ministers. He agreed with the noble Viscount (Viscount Mandeville) that it was their duty to take care that the interests of the British colonies, which had no specific representation in that House, should not be neglected; and this was especially necessary at the present time, when it was notorious that the colonists were suffering extraordinary pressure. The hon. Member for Montrose had brought charges of the grossest misgovernment against the noble Earl at the head of the Colonial Department, which had not been satisfactorily answered. He (Mr. Bankes) considered it the duty of the party with which he acted, from respect to the memory of a noble Lord (Lord G. Bentinck), who was most zealous and indefatigable in supporting the interests of the colonies, to endeavour, as far as was in their power, to promote the welfare of those dependencies. He believed, indeed, that the indefatigable application of his noble Friend to the interests of the colonies tended greatly to shorten his existence. When he last saw his noble Friend in that House, observing him to be greatly fatigued by his attention to his public duties, he endeavoured to prevail upon him to leave the House to obtain some necessary refreshment; but the noble Lord replied that he was watching over the interests of the colonies, which he was determined to protect to the utmost of his power, and he refused to leave the House even for a few moments. He regretted that the Government had not taken into consideration the very able suggestions that had been made by the noble Lord upon that subject. If he (Mr. Bankes) did not know that the pressure upon these interests was daily and hourly increasing, he should not now have risen to press on the attention of the Government the claims of that interest, which he knew they were as ready as he was to acknowledge, but which the peculiar circumstances in which they were placed rendered it impossible for them to do justice to without immediate and unremitting attention. No allusion was made in the Royal Speech to the condition of the agricultural interest. The pressure upon that interest was daily and hourly increasing, and had already proceeded to an extent of which he thought the Ministers could not be aware, or they would have deemed it their duty to take some notice of the subject. The noble Lord opposite had expressed his opinion that the changes which had lately been made with reference to the agricultural interest would ultimately tend to benefit that interest; but he would ask the noble Lord what was to become of the agricultural interest in the mean time, oppressed as it was with burdens, especially in the shape of poor-rates, which threatened to bring it into the same condition to which Ireland had been already reduced? He joined most cordially in supporting the Amendment of his hon. Friend (Mr. Disraeli), and in condemning the Government for omitting from Her Majesty's Speech any allusion to the two important interests to which he had referred. He (Mr. Bankes), and those with whom he acted, concurred with Ministers in the expression of satisfaction that, both in the north and south of Europe, the contending parties had consented to a suspension of arms for the purpose of negotiating terms of peace; but it was perfectly consistent with that concurrence to state that they did not find in regard to our relations with foreign Powers any subject of congratulation. There were omissions from the Speech, with regard to our foreign relations, of a very significant character. Last year this country experienced an unparalleled outrage and insult from a hitherto friendly nation. The British Ambassador was dismissed with ignominy and insult from the Court of Spain; and he thought it was due to the honour and character of this country that Her Majesty's Ministers should now have an opportunity of affording explanations on the subject. The Spanish Government sent over an individual to explain the circumstances under which the British Ambassador had been expelled, but the noble Viscount (Viscount Palmerston) refused to hold any communication with him; and yet, after the insults this country had received in the person of its representative, the Spanish Ambassador was allowed to remain undisturbed in London. When some inquiries were made on this subject last Session, the noble Viscount (Viscount Palmerston) stated that negotiations were then pending. He (Mr. Bankes) begged now to ask the noble Lord whether those negotiations were still pending; and if any satisfactory results had been obtained? This was an omission which he thought it to be the duty of hon. Members not connected with the Government to bring under the notice of the House; and for these reasons he considered the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Buckinghamshire to be justified in respect of foreign affairs. With regard to the commercial and manufacturing interests of the country, he conceived the Amendment to be also justified. The condition of those interests was not a circumstance calling for the congratulation of the country. The hon. Members for Manchester and the West Riding of Yorkshire might entertain the idea that commerce and manufactures were in a palmy state of prosperity; and, should those hon. Members vouchsafe to deliver in the Imperial Parliament some of those speeches which they had uttered in the parliament of Manchester, they might possibly convince hon. Members on his side of the House; but, until that was the case, he must beg leave to remain of a contrary opinion. He believed that, so far from those recent alterations which had been made in the policy of this country having proved successful in securing greater steadiness in respect to the industrial interests of the country, whether as regarded commerce or agriculture, they had entirely failed. It might, perhaps, be too soon to pronounce a decisive verdict upon the success or failure of free-trade measures; but at least this result might now be drawn—that in the three years of experiment which they had had, those engaged in commerce had suffered, those engaged in manufactures had suffered, and those engaged in agriculture are suffering now. These were the grounds of the Amendment which had been submitted by his hon. Friend for the consideration of the House; and when the noble Lord at the head of the Government was pleased to say that his hon. Friend had endeavoured to divert the House from the real subjects which ought to engage its attention, he begged leave to say he differed in opinion from the noble Lord, and to state, on the contrary, that the Amendment and speech of his hon. Friend were calculated to call our attention to those very questions which ought to engage our attention at this particular time, and which had been omitted from the Speech from the Throne. His hon. Friend had brought to the notice of the House those colonial interests which ought never to be forgotten, and which we cannot forget now that the pressure is coming so heavily upon us. It was upon these grounds that he supported the Amendment proposed by the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire.

Mr. URQUHART would support the Amendment which had been proposed by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Buckinghamshire. He could not give a silent vote in support of that Amendment, and therefore would state some of the grounds on which his vote would be given. The Speech they had heard from the Throne was one of the most important documents recorded in the archives of this country, and the occasion was one of great peculiarity as regarded the branch of the Speech on which he should principally dwell, and which had reference to the convulsions that had taken place in Europe. The course adopted by the noble Lord at the head of the Government, in his reply to the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire, had, he would confess, placed the Opposition in the most favourable point of view. He had listened in vain to the speech of the noble Lord for anything like an answer to the charges brought forward against the Government by his hon. Friend. With respect to the events in the north and south of Europe, the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire had pointed out the failure of the attempts at mediation on the part of the Government of this country. In reply to that, the noble Lord at the head of the Government had stated that the Government of France had proposed to this country a mediation between the contending Powers. It was an abuse of words to call such a proposition a proposition for a mediation. Sicily and Naples were not consulted on the subject, and it was, therefore, merely an arrangement between the two Governments as to what terms they should impose upon the parties. The hon. Member for Radnorshire (Sir John Walsh) had said that he saw no reason to complain of any breach of promise with respect to the employment of the forces of this country in Sicily, and that, upon various grounds, he was perfectly satisfied with the proceedings of Admiral Parker in the Bay of Naples. The pledge, however, given to him (Mr. Urquhart) by the noble Lord at the head of the Government, was not with respect to any special act in the Bay of Naples, but it was that no part of the forces acting under Admiral Parker should upon any consideration transgress the recognised law of nations. That law was not, however, to be decided by any private individual, but by rules and authority laid down and long acted upon. Relying upon the statement of the noble Lord, he had hoped that no violation of the law would have taken place; but finding that some interference had taken place upon the part of Her Majesty's forces, he hoped to have heard from the noble Lord, either his explanation of the law of nations in that respect, or some contradiction of the statement as to the alleged interference or condemnation of the officers who had taken upon themselves to act in so extraordinary a manner. The presence of the fleet in the Bay of Naples was not to be accounted for by the petty difference existing between England and Sicily, in consequence of the latter Power making a proposition to impose certain taxes, which would remotely affect the interests of British subjects in that island; for it was admitted that upon that subject the explanations of the Sicilian Government had been perfectly satisfactory; a suspicion must therefore arise that the fleet under Admiral Parker was stationed in the Bay of Naples for some ulterior purpose. Did it belong to an English Admiral, however great his talents, to proceed to open up diplomatic questions affecting the interests of the two countries, as though they were matters between himself and the Government, without the least instructions from the Government, and thereby to encroach upon the sovereign power and prerogatives of the Crown? The speech of the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) had stamped with shame and disgrace the Government of this country to an extent that had never before appeared. It appeared, from the explanation of the noble Lord, that it was the French Admiral who first proposed the intervention, and that the English Admiral, acting upon his advice, had consented to adopt measures in conjunction with him. Documents had found their way to the public which he had been assured by the noble Viscount at the head of the Foreign Department were correct, and in them he was not able to find the least corroboration of the statements made by the noble Lord the Member for the city of London. He found, from those documents, that the initiatory step had been taken by the French Executive in the island of Sicily, and about ten days after the action commenced on the part of the English and French Admirals. What was the meaning of exhibiting to the world the Crown of England in such an abject condition, that it was bound to follow in the wake of revolutionary France, in the violation of every law of justice and honour? For what purpose, he would ask, was it that they maintained a foreign establishment, and employed representatives abroad, if the power which was thereby created was to be placed in the hands of parties, to be employed by them, without instructions from the supreme authority at home. He now ventured to give a warning to the Government. There was no man in the House, who had more right, from the verification of his past predictions, to give such a warning. The noble Viscount at the head of the Foreign Department said, in the course of last Session, that while the nations around him were changing, he (Mr. Urquhart) alone remained unchanged, repeating his old croaking note. That note remained still unchanged, but it was no longer a solitary one. It required time for such ideas to spread. He would, now, therefore, give some advice to Her Majesty's Government. They had once before been broken up by the noble Viscount, who made England a personal affair of his own, as if it were a wardrobe of old clothes; and he warned the Government, that if they did not separate themselves from the noble Secretary for Foreign Affairs, whose course of policy was calculated to sully the honour of Britain, that noble Lord would drag them down, and treat them as before.

VISCOUNT PALMERSTON: Sir, I have three objections to state to the Amendment which we are now discussing. In the first place, it calls upon the House to declare that it will give no opinion on a matter on which no opinion has been asked; secondly, it gives an opinion on two other matters with regard to which that opinion is inconsistent with facts; and, thirdly, it endeavours by a side wind to extract from the House an opinion on matters of great importance, and on which the opinion of the majority is adverse to that of those who framed the Amendment. It happens sometimes that the pith of a letter is contained in the postscript; and the real views of the framers of the Amendment are contained in the last paragraph. That paragraph, which adverts to the omission of any mention of the colonies and of agriculture in the Speech, is dexterously worded; but we have had revelations elsewhere, if I am not misinformed, and even if we had not, the Amendment itself sufficiently shows that the real object of that last paragraph is to record the opinions of its framers against the doctrine of free trade, against the repeal of the corn laws, and against the removal of discriminating duties. That intention, I believe, has been manfully acknowledged in another place. But, I must say, that it would be more fitting for those who entertain those opinions, more respectful to the House, and more fair towards the people of this country, to bring those opinions before the House by a substantive Motion, instead of endeavouring to trick the House out of an opinion on pretence of an Amendment to an Address. In the next place, the Amendment proposes to the House to state that it can find no subject for congratulation in the improvement of the revenue, and in the beginning of a revival of trade. Why, Sir, I can easily understand that those who have resisted the improvements in our commercial system, who regret the abolition of protection, and deplore every movement which has been made in the direction of free trade, can find no subject for congratulation in an improving revenue and reviving commerce; because improving revenue and reviving trade negative the predictions which they made, and are the best refutation of their opinions. Then we come to the first paragraph of the Amendment, in which it is proposed to the House to say, that they cannot congratulate Her Majesty on the state of our foreign relations. My answer to that is, Who asked you to congratulate Her Majesty on the state of Her relations with foreign Powers? If you say, you cannot do it; I say, wait till you are asked: those who moved and seconded the Address never asked the House to give an opinion upon our foreign relations. It would be highly improper to ask the House to express on the present occasion any opinion on the foreign relations of the country. An Address to the Throne is always studiously framed in such a manner as not to commit any body in the House to any opinion on the subjects which it embraces. It would be wrong in those who frame an Address to commit the House to an opinion on matters which will undergo discussion in the course of the Session; and, therefore, it would not only be a departure from invariable usage, but a breach of propriety, to ask the House to give such an opinion upon any of the matters contained in the Speech. But when hon. Gentlemen opposite say that they are unable to congratulate Her Majesty on the state of our foreign relations, in answer to that portion of Her Majesty's Speech which announces that papers will be laid before the House, explaining the condition of those foreign relations, I must say that the House will be stultifying itself if it says that it is unable to congratulate Her Majesty on a matter in which, till that information be received, the House must be comparatively uninformed. But I go a little further than that: I will boldly maintain in opposition to the Gentlemen over the way, and in contradiction to the Amendment, that this House, and all those who have attended in the slightest degree to what is passing in the world, might upon that information which is possessed by all, congratulate Her Majesty on the state of our foreign relations. Why, what is the great object which the people of this country have at heart in regard to our foreign relations? What is the end which, next to the maintenance of the interests of the country, they consider to be chiefly important? In the first place, the maintenance of peace with the rest of the world; and next, if possible, the prevention of war between other nations. Have these objects been accomplished? I maintain that they have been accomplished; and I say also, that if we are to express any opinion on the subject, there is matter for congratulation from this House to Her Majesty so far as this state of things may be ascribed to the action of the Government of this country; and I have it from the mouths of our accusers, that it is owing to the action of the Government of this country that there is peace between us and the nations of the Continent, and that those hostilities which have broken out in other parts of Europe have been suspended by armistices, and are in train for satisfactory and final adjustment. We have not indeed heard a clear expression of the opinions entertained by those who have been our accusers on the present occasion; but still the truth has broken forth, as I shall have occasion presently to show in adverting to the speech of the Member for Dorsetshire, (Mr. Bankes), and the real fault found with Her Majesty's Government is, that we are not at war with some of our allies. Our great offence is, that we have remained on amicable terms and have cultivated a good understanding with the Republican Government of France. There are those who think that the Government of a republic is not sufficiently good company for the Government of a monarchy. We are taunted with having sent an Ambassador post-haste over to Paris, which it so happens that we did not do, because our Ambassador has remained at his post, and has not left Paris since the revolution of last February. Now, I hold that the relations of Governments are, in fact, the relations between those nations to which the Governments belong. The Governments are the organs of nations, and it is only through such organs that one nation can communicate with another. What business is it of ours to inquire what organ any foreign nation chooses to have? What business is it of ours to ask whether the French nation thinks proper to be governed by a king, an emperor, a president, or a consul? Our object and our duty is to cement the closest ties of friendship between ourselves and our nearest neighbour, one of the greatest Powers of the world—that neighbour of whom it has been said in this debate, that in war she would be our most formidable enemy, and in peace our most useful friend. There is nothing, I am convinced, in the real interests of England and France which can stand in the way of the most cordial friendship between the two nations. There may be passions, there may be prejudices to be overcome; but those prejudices are passing away, and those passions are calming down. Reflection is teaching the people of both countries to see that there is nothing in the real interests of England or France which can clash injuriously with each other, and that it is for the good of both countries to cultivate the most friendly relations. I think it due to those public men who have been successively at the head of the Government of France since the month of February last, to say that their conduct towards this country has been marked by the most perfect good faith, and by the greatest frankness; and that they have not only manifested an anxious desire to be on friendly terms with England, but have invariably expressed those pacific dispositions towards the rest of Europe, which, attaching as we do the greatest importance to the preservation of peace, must be the foundation of a really good understanding between France and this country. We did not withdraw our Ambassador from France when the revolution took place. We could not, indeed, give him those usual technical credentials which are given and interchanged between established Governments, because the Government of France was then, even in its very name, professedly provisional; but the moment the Government assumed a permanent character, those credentials were interchanged, and since then the relations between the two countries have been maintained in the ordinary manner. Has that contributed to maintain the peace of Europe? I say that it has. The French Government was anxious to pursue a pacific policy towards the other countries of Europe; but if we had rejected the friendly overtures of France; if we had frowned upon the young republic; if we had given countenance to other Governments, if such there be, who have a dislike to the form of government which France has adopted, and had given aid directly or indirectly to them—I cannot say that the Government of France would have been able to carry out their desire of maintaining the peace of Europe, the maintenance of which last year was of such paramount importance. So much with respect to our relations with France; and I must venture to think that there is some reason why this country may congratulate itself with respect to these circumstances, although the hon. Gentlemen opposite refuse to join in the congratulation. Now, with regard to what have been called our mock mediations. Why, any one who has heard what has passed here and elsewhere within the last twenty-four hours, might be induced to think that, never before this year, was there such a thing as a mediation, and that it was a thing newly invented for some mischievous purpose by the present Government. I confess that I must plead guilty to having committed this crime of mediation long before the present year, and fortunately, I may state, with considerable success. The Government of which I had the honour of being a Member, was able, in 1834, by means of a mediation, to prevent a rupture between France and the United States; and was also by the same means enabled, in 1838, to make peace between France and the Government of Mexico. Other smaller and less important mediations I do not mention, but I might do, as they were also successful; but the two which I have mentioned prevented hostilities, which must have been followed by very serious consequences. But in this sweeping condemnation of mediations, my predecessor in office, the Earl of Aberdeen, is liable to a similar charge as myself, for he in conjunction with Russia mediated between Turkey and Persia, and also between Denmark, Sardinia, and Morocco; to say nothing of that unfortunate mediation upon which the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire (Mr. Disraeli) so much dwelt—I mean that respecting the affairs of the River Plate, which is still going on, and the responsibility, in regard to which, I share with my predecessor in office. I trust that some paragraph will be inserted in the Amendment in condemnation of my predecessor as well as myself for resorting to these courses. "Mock mediations," indeed! One would really suppose from what has been said, that these mediations were merely diplomatic dramas, got up for the amusement of diplomatists, and leading to no practical or useful result. The impression endeavoured to be created, is, that we went about Europe for the purpose of imposing our mediation between Government and Government in a way which led to no result, and which would come to no satisfactory end. Now, is this so? Take the mediation between Denmark and Germany. How did that begin? The Government of Denmark asked us to interfere hostilely against Germany, in virtue of our guarantee of 1721: in reply, we offered our mediation, which was accepted by both parties; and although that mediation has not led to a final conclusion, it has been attended with the advantage of obtaining a suspension of hostilities, of preserving the peace of Europe, and of putting an end to that disturbance of commerce, which the hostilities had for several months produced; and I trust that it will lead to a satisfactory adjustment, which shall be honourable for all parties. The hon. Member for Buckinghamshire said that we should have let these matters alone, for Denmark would have received the support of strong and zealous allies, and would have thus been enabled soon to settle the question in her own way. This, no doubt, was very pretty; but what was this but, in other words, a European war? There was Germany on the one hand running wild with a particular doctrine about the Duchies of Schleswig and of Holstein; on the other hand, there was Denmark strong in her opinion of her rights, and supported in her claims by Russia, France, and Sweden. Denmark was worsted in the field; and the troops of Austria and Prussia on the one side, and of Russia and France and Sweden on the other, were to meet on the plains of Schleswig, to determine this question. What was this but a European war? And we are blamed, forsooth, for having prevented it! This is the first article of our impeachment. The charge is, that we prevented Germany from being involved in a war with France and Russia. I feel no alarm as to the opinion which the House will come to on this point. Then, as to our mediation between Austria and Lombardy—what is its history? In May last Austria sent over an able diplomatist who had previously been connected with the Embassy in this country, Baron Hummelauer, with the view of requesting the good offices and mediation of England between Austria and her revolted Italian subjects. This diplomatist proposed some terms as the basis of mediation, which I will not go into now, as the papers which will be laid on the table will show what it was; but it is sufficient for me to say that he made certain propositions. We said "that this Government would mediate with the greatest pleasure, and that it would give us the liveliest satisfaction if we could be of any service to such an ancient and respected ally as Austria; but with respect to the propositions which he had made, we knew that they would not be accepted by the other party, and, therefore, it would only place us in a situation of difficulty to propose them; but if he would only make certain additions to her proposition, we would interpose and use all our influence in the matter." What was the answer of the Austrian diplomatist? He said that he was not authorised to accede to such suggestions as we had made, but that he would not take upon himself the responsibility of rejecting them—that he would take them, *ad referendum*, and submit them to his Government. No answer was received by us from Austria; but I believe that Baron Hummelauer's propositions were afterwards made by the Austrian Government to the Lombards, but were not accepted by the latter, and, therefore, fell to the ground. At a later period things took a different turn; for the Austrian army, having been largely reinforced, obtained considerable advantages. Application was then made to France by the Lombards for an armed intervention; and the Government of France, in that spirit of confidence and good faith which it has always manifested toward us, said, that if we offered to join with them in mediation, and proposed terms of peace between the conflicting parties, it would act with us, and decline armed interference; but, if we did not do so, it might be unable to prevent an armed interference of France in the affairs of Italy. We assented. This, then, is our second fault: we prevented a war in Italy, which would infallibly have led to a general war in Europe; and we joined France in a mediation which prevented such a European war. This is crime the second. Sir, I believe that I may look with perfect confidence to the opinion of the House on this part of our impeachment. As for the allegation that we endeavoured to impose terms upon Austria, it is utterly untrue. There is no imposition of terms, and no intention of imposing terms. We have stated why we believe that the arrangements which we suggested were the best for the real and well-understood interests of Austria: it was for Austria to accept those arrangements or not; but the Austrian Government is as free to refuse them as we were to offer them. Then as to the mediation between Naples and Sicily. This mediation was asked for repeatedly by that Personage, whom, to follow the example of the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire, though not his theory, I may call the King of Naples. I say that this mediation was repeatedly asked by the Neapolitan Government; and Lord Minto was sent for from Rome to Naples expressly for that purpose. When Lord Minto went from England he had no instructions to go to Naples; but the Neapolitan Minister in England called upon me, and said, if Lord Minto were to proceed to Naples, he would be most cordially received. My reply was, that it was no part of his instructions to go on to Naples; but that if he should receive through our Chargé d'Affaires at Naples, an intimation that the King of Naples wished him to do so, he should be instructed at once to obey such a summons, and that I would immediately send him instructions and credentials for such a contingency. Lord Minto was invited by the King to go to Naples, and he accordingly went thither. At Naples he was in constant communication with the Neapolitan Government, and he was strongly urged to go over to Sicily to communicate with the Provisional Government there, with a view to effect an amicable arrangement. He at length proceeded there, and he was received by the Government of Sicily; but the arrangement which he was authorised to offer, unfortunately did not succeed, for in the meanwhile the news arrived of the revolution at Paris, which altered much the state of feeling in Sicily; and Lord Minto returned to Rome. And here I must make a remark on an observation which fell from the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. John O'Connell), as to what took place at Rome. The hon. Member said, that a dinner had been given at Rome by Lord Minto to Senor Sterbini, and that this had led to the disturbances and to the lamentable events which have since occurred in that city. But it so happened that Lord Minto did not give any dinner whatever to Senor Sterbini; therefore the events of the last twelvemonths at Rome are not attributable to any such dinner. Well, we withdrew from that mediation between Naples and Sicily, continuing, however, to feel a great interest in the affairs of Sicily. Those who know the connexion which the British Government had with the establishment of the constitution in Sicily in 1812, the sort of assurances given by our Minister of that day—not, indeed, amounting to a guarantee of the constitution of 1812, for no guarantee was given by this country—must be aware that much encouragement and much assurance was held out that the Government of England would afford to the Sicilians moral assistance in maintaining that constitution; and by this it must be seen that the Government of England cannot avoid taking a lively interest in the affairs of that country. I now come to the expedition which the King of Naples sent to Sicily. Towards the end of last Session, some questions respecting this matter were asked of my noble Friend at the head of the Government, and of myself; and we answered that we could not, without inconvenience to the public service, state what were the instructions given or not given on this subject to Lord Napier, or to the Admiral of the fleet; but in point of fact no instructions to interfere were given, and no obstacles were interposed by the Admiral when the expedition was sent to Sicily. It reached Messina, and commenced operations. I have heard that it has elsewhere been stated that the King of Naples took possession of Messina, the stronghold of the Sicilians, and that their cause then became hopeless. Why, the Neapolitans had never been driven out of Messina—they had been driven out of Palermo—but the citadel and fortresses of Messina were the strongholds of the Neapolitans, and not of the Sicilians. But after the town of Messina had ceased its resistance, after the flag in the batteries of the Sicilians had been hauled down, and every token of cessation of hostilities had been exhibited, the assailants continued, for eight hours, a savage bombardment of the place, destroying houses, churches, hospitals, public buildings—every thing, in a word, that was exposed to their fire. After that, they landed a body of troops to complete the destruction which the shells and the cannon-shot might have left incomplete; and these troops laid waste three miles of suburbs—burning, plundering, devastating, murdering. The Admirals heard of this. They were men accustomed to scenes of war, but only of war carried on according to the practice of civilised nations; and they felt disgusted and revolted. Still more. They knew that Palermo was doomed to the same fate which had been inflicted on Messina; and when they knew that thousands of these wretched people were weltering in their blood, or seeking refuge in crowds on board the ships in the harbour, or flying across the fields to escape their pursuing murderers, the Admirals said, "We cannot permit these shocking scenes to be repeated at Palermo;" and, although they had no instructions or authority to take any steps whatever, they said, "We will stop these atrocious proceedings, at least until we can receive the decisions of our respective Governments." They did so; they established an armistice. A line of demarcation was drawn out—the Neapolitans to occupy the eastern verge of the island, and the Sicilians the remainder. What were the Governments of England and France to do in a case of that kind? Was it fitting that civilians sitting here in their comfortable homes, men who had never seen a shot fired in anger, or blood shed in the field—was it fitting that they should be sterner than these Admirals—men accustomed to all the horrors incident to ordinary war? Was it fitting we should say, let Palermo share the fate of Messina, let these troops go on and destroy the first as they had destroyed the second city of Sicily? Why, Sir, I do not think so ill of those who now seek to condemn us as to believe that they would have done otherwise than we did. I feel sure that no man of ordinary feelings could, under the same circumstances, have come to any other decision. This act of the Admirals was followed up by negotiation. I will not now speak upon matters concerning which the conflicting passions and hostile opinions of men are yet alive. Still, I will say, that I am not without hopes that those negotiations may be satisfactorily concluded, and that the interposition of the Admirals may lead to an honourable and satisfactory adjustment between the King of Naples and the Sicilians; and if that consummation should be accomplished, no man need feel regret that the Admirals took upon themselves to interfere. Time has been of great value in this, as it has proved in other cases. At the moment when the smoking ashes of Messina were before the eyes of the Sicilians—when they saw their dead unburied, their wounded uncured, they might have refused an accommodation which may now, by possibility, be accepted; and, on the other hand, the King of Naples may now consent to an arrangement which, in the moment of excitement, and of victory, he might perhaps have determined to reject. At all events, we have the satisfaction of thinking that the mediation of England and France has prevented great calamities in Sicily; and I trust that, while on the one hand, that mediation will secure happiness and constitutional freedom for the Sicilians, it will also lead to a permanent union of the Crowns of Sicily and of Naples on the head of the same monarch. These, then, are the crimes for which this House is called upon to take the unusual step of pronouncing a condemnation of the Government on the first evening of a Session — a condemnation to be expressed without the papers which, it has been announced, will be given! A prudent measure, certainly, on the part of those who anticipate full well that when the papers come, their censure will not be borne out. Good policy, no doubt, to begin the fight before the grounds of the proceedings are known. I have said that the animus of the framer of this Amendment, showed itself a little in certain indications contained in the speech of the hon. Member for Dorsetshire. That hon. Gentleman said that the Government of Spain offered last year an affront to the Government of England by sending away our Minister from Madrid. He took more credit to himself than I am disposed to allow him, by assuming that it was in consequence of some notice or some Motion of his, that the Government requested Senor Isturitz, then the Minister of Spain in this country, to return to Spain, in consequence of the dismissal of Sir Henry Bulwer. I assure my hon. Friend he is entirely wrong on that point, and that he had no share whatever in influencing the decision of Her Majesty's Government on that occasion. But at the same time—betraying what was passing in his mind—he said that many months have now passed since a gross insult had been offered to this country, and that it had been passed by—that we had remained passive under that affront, and have not yet obtained redress; and he asked, where is the spirit—where is the dignity of the English Government? Now, what does this mean, except that we ought to have gone to war with Spain in revenge for that affront? We did, as it appears to me, that which was appropriate to the occasion. We desired the Minister of Spain to go back from London to Madrid, in consequence of the Minister of England having been desired to quit Madrid for London. Although I admit the act of Spain was an affront—although I feel that reparation is due—and although I trust that when the Spanish Government comes calmly to reflect upon the matter, and to see how insufficient were the grounds upon which it proceeded, it may feel inclined to make that reparation; yet I confess I am not prepared to go the length of the hon. Gentleman, and to say that we ought to have declared war against Spain, as a revenge for that affront. Sir, I have been sometimes accused, wholly without foundation, of being prone to measures that have a tendency to lead to war. The war party now sits there. [*Here the noble Lord pointed to the Opposition side of the House amid great cheering and laughter.*] I laid all the papers connected with that Spanish transaction on the table last year; and what it is the hon. Gentleman wants now, remains for him more clearly to explain. The hon. Member for Cockermouth complained that the proceedings of the Foreign Office—not, indeed, blaming me particularly for this, but speaking of what has been done from time immemorial—are involved in mystery and secrecy, highly mortifying to his curiosity. I feel much for the disappointed inquisitiveness of my hon. Friend; and I assure him that when I was out of office, it would have been equally gratifying to me to have had the run of — I do not say all—for that would have been too much—but of the principal—of the pick of the most interesting despatches written and received at the Foreign Office; and I can quite conceive that it would be exceedingly interesting to Members of this House, to have every day left at their houses with the Votes the last despatches of importance written or received at the Foreign Office. I have some doubt, nevertheless, whether such a course would contribute much to the preservation of the peace of the world, or conduce to the real interests of the country. It happens, too, that such a course would not be according to the constitution of this country, which vests in the Crown, and not in the House of Commons, the conduct of foreign negotiations. But I assure my hon. Friend also, that if there be one method which, more than another, would be sure to immerse the country in difficulties, render those difficulties incurable, and lead to unavoidable ruptures, it would be, that a popular assembly should take possession of diplomatic transactions. That very publicity which my hon. Friend wishes to attain, would be fatal to accommodation in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred. If a proposition to negotiate for a certain object were given out to be published in the next week, how could it be expected that a Government, which might have rejected an overture in the first instance, would be induced to reflect over and modify a first decision? Nail them down to a first objection, and you render accommodation impossible. Pit two popular assemblies one against the other, and you put out of the question all amicable adjustment, and bring the nations in a position out of which there is no way, unless by that method of honourable meeting which is sometimes resorted to between individuals. There is in this country, I am told, an anti-duelling society, and I trust they will interfere to prevent my hon. Friend from enforcing his diplomatic revelations. One of the mediations which I have referred to, is an example of the principle I have mentioned—namely, that between the Governments of France and the United States in 1834. The Chamber of France and the Congress of the United States had unfortunately become pledged to different opinions, and the two countries were in that state, that, without the intervention of some third friendly Power, it would have been impossible for them to avoid having recourse to the arbitrement of arms. By our friendly offices the matter was adjusted, and peace preserved. But I assure my hon. Friend, that nothing could be so fatal to the interests of the country as that publicity which for his own gratification he so naturally wishes to have established, of the correspondence of the Foreign Office. This, then, is the state of the matter. We stand here charged with the grave offence of having preserved a good understanding with the republic of France, and of having thereby essentially contributed to the maintenance of peace in Europe. We are charged with the other offence of having put an end to hostilities in Schleswig-Holstein, which might have led to a European war. We are accused of having persuaded Austria and Sardinia to lay down their arms when their differences might have involved the Powers of Europe in contention. We are reproached with having prevented great calamities in Sicily, and of labouring to restore friendly relations between the King of Naples and his Sicilian subjects. These, Sir, are the charges which the House is called upon to determine for or against us. We stand here as promoters of peace. We stand here as men who have laboured assiduously to prevent war if possible; and where it had broken out, to put an end to it as soon as was practicable. We stand here as the promoters of peace, under charges brought against us by the advocates of war. I leave it to the House to decide between us and our accusers; and I look with confidence to the verdict which the House will give.

The MARQUESS of GRANBY moved the adjournment of the debate.

LORD J. RUSSELL said, he would take the sense of the House upon that proposition. At a comparatively late hour, when no other Member seemed to disposed to address the House, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stafford rose, and expressed his opinion, at some length, upon foreign affairs. The hon. Gentleman had been answered by his noble Friend, and surely the question was now ripe for decision. There had now been two nights' debate upon the Address, in the course of which the matters contained in it had been considerably discussed, and they would be frequently discussed hereafter in the course of the Session. Under these circumstances, he put it to the House whether, if the debate should be adjourned to another night, they would not be setting rather a bad example—whether, in fact, it would not be better to decide the question now, in order that they might begin the next week by practical discussions upon practical subjects.

MR. HERRIES defended the course of the noble Lord, and advocated the adjournment of the debate. At least, if the debate were now terminated thus imperfectly, the noble Lord who had last spoken must not be surprised if some of the statements he had now made were afterwards brought under the consideration of the House.

LORD J. RUSSELL said, he should certainly never complain if the topics comprised in the Address were hereafter brought, as they must be, under discussion. He thought the noble Lord opposite must see that the general wish was that the debate should now terminate.

The MARQUESS of GRANBY said he should press his Motion for adjournment.

House divided on the question "That the Debate be now adjourned:"—Ayes 80; Noes 221: Majority 141.

List of the AYES.

Anstey, T. C.
Arkwright, G.
Baillie, H. J.
Baldock, E. H.
Bankes, G.
Bateson, T.
Bennet, P.
Blakemore, R.
Boldero, H. G.
Bremridge, R.
Broadwood, H.
Brooke, Lord
Buller, Sir J. Y.
Cabbell, B. B.
Chichester, Lord J. L.
Christopher, R. A.
Clive, H. B.
Codrington, Sir W.
Cole, hon. H. A.
Disraeli, B.
Dod, J. W.
Du Pre, C. G.
Fellowes, E.
Floyer, J.
Forbes, W.
Forester, hon. G. C. W.
Fox, S. W. L.
Fuller, A. E.
Godson, R.
Granby, Marq. of
Gwyn, H.
Halford, Sir H.
Hall, Col.
Hamilton, G. A.
Harris, hon. Capt.
Herries, rt. hon. J. C.
Hildyard, T. B. T.
Hodgson, W. N.
Hood, Sir A.
Hornby, J.
Knightley, Sir C.
Knox, Col.
Law, hon. C. E.
Lennox, Lord H. G.
Lowther, H.
Mandeville, Visct.
March, Earl of
Meux, Sir H.
Miles, W.
Moody, C. A.
Morgan, O.
Mullings, J. R.
Neeld, J.
Newport, Visct.
Ossulston, Lord
Packe, C. W.
Palmer, R.
Pigot, Sir R.
Prime, R.
Renton, J. C.
Robinson, G. R.
Rolleston, Col.
Scott, hon. F.
Shirley, E. J.
Sibthorp, Col.
Sidney, Ald.
Somerset, Capt.
Spooner, R.
Stafford, A.
Stuart, J.
Taylor, T. E.
Thompson, Ald.
Thornhill, G.
Tyrell, Sir J. T.
Urquhart, D.
Vyse, R. H. R. H.
Waddington, H. S.
Walsh, Sir J. B.
Wodehouse, E.
Worcester, Marq. of

TELLERS.

Newdegate, C. N.
Mackenzie, W. F.

List of the NOES.

Acland, Sir T. D.
Adair, H. E.
Adair, R. A. S.
Adderley, C. B.
Aglionby, H. A.
Alcock, T.
Anson, hon. Col.
Anson, Visct.
Armstrong, Sir A.
Armstrong, R. B.
Arundel and Surrey, Earl of
Bagshaw, J.
Bass, T.
Bellew, R. M.
Berkeley, hon. Capt.
Berkeley, hon. H. F.
Berkeley, C. L. G.
Blackall, S. W.
Blewitt, R. J.
Bouverie, hon. E. P.
Bowles, Adm.
Boyle, hon. Col.
Bramston, T. W.
Brotherton, J.
Bunbury, E. H.
Busfeild, W.
Buxton, Sir E. N.
Campbell, hon. W. F.
Carter, J. B.
Cavendish, hon. C. C.
Cavendish, W. G.
Cayley, E. S.
Chaplin, W. J.
Charteris, hon. F.
Childers, J. W.
Clay, Sir W.
Clements, hon. C. S.
Clerk, rt. hon. Sir G.
Clifford, H. M.
Cobden, R.
Cockburn, A. J. E.
Colebrooke, Sir T. E.
Copeland, Ald.
Cowper, hon. W. F.
Craig, W. G.
Crawford, W. S.
Crowder, R. B.
Currie, R.
Dalrymple, Capt.
Dashwood, G. H.
Dawson, hon. T. V.
Deedes, W.
Douglas, Sir C. E.
Duke, Sir J.
Duncan, Visct.
Duncan, G.
Dundas, Adm.
Dundas, Sir D.
Ebrington, Visct.
Ellis, J.
Elliot, hon. J. E.
Enfield, Visct.
Evans, J.
Evans, W.
Ewart, W.
Fagan, W.
Fergus, J.
Filmer, Sir E.
Fitzpatrick, rt. hon. J.
Fitzwilliam, hon. G. W.
Foley, J. H. H.
Fordyce, A. D.
Forster, M.

Fox, W. J.
Gibson, rt. hon. T. M.
Gladstone, rt. hon. W. E.
Glyn, G. C.
Goulburn, rt. hon. H.
Graham, rt. hon. Sir J.
Grenfell, C. P.
Grenfell, C. W.
Grey, R. W.
Hallyburton, Lord J. F.
Hardcastle, J. A.
Harris, R.
Hastie, A.
Hawes, B.
Hay, Lord J.
Hayter, W. G.
Headlam, T. E.
Heald, J.
Heathcoat, J.
Herbert, H. A.
Herbert, rt. hon. S.
Hervey, Lord A.
Hindley, C.
Hobhouse, rt. hon. Sir J.
Hobhouse, T. B.
Hodges, T. L.
Hodges, T. T.
Hogg, Sir J. W.
Horsman, E.
Howard, Lord E.
Howard, hon. C. W. G.
Hume, J.
Humphery, Ald.
Inglis, Sir R. H.
Jermyn, Earl
Jervis, Sir J.
Johnstone, Sir J.
Keppel, hon. G. T.
Kershaw, J.
King, hon. P. J. L.
Labouchere, rt. hon. H.
Langston, J. H.
Lascelles, hon. W. S.
Lewis, G. C.
Lincoln, Earl of
Littleton, hon. E. R.
Locke, J.
Long, W.
Lushington, C.
M'Gregor, J.
Mahon, Visct.
Maitland, T.
Mangles, R. D.
Martin, J.
Martin, C. W.
Martin, S.
Masterman, J.
Matheson, A.
Matheson, Col.
Maule, rt. hon. F.
Melgund, Visct.
Milner, W. M. E.
Milnes, R. M.
Milton, Visct.
Mitchell, T. A.
Moffatt, G.
Molesworth, Sir W.
Monsell, W.
Moore, G. H.
Morison, Sir W.
Mostyn, hon. E. M. L.
Mulgrave, Earl of
Muntz, G. F.
Newry and Morne, Visct.
Norreys, Lord
Nugent, Lord
Ogle, S. C. H.
Owen, Sir J.
Paget, Lord A.
Paget, Lord C.
Palmer, R.
Palmerston, Visct.
Parker, J.
Pearson, C.
Perfect, R.
Peto, S. M.
Pigott, F.
Pinney, W.
Plowden, W. H. C.
Price, Sir R.
Pugh, D.
Raphael, A.
Rawdon, Col.
Reid, Col.
Ricardo, J. L.
Ricardo, O.
Rice, E. R.
Rich, H.
Romilly, Sir J.
Rumbold, C. E.
Russell, Lord J.
Russell, F. C. H.
Sandars, J.
Scholefield, W.
Scrope, G. P.
Seaham, Visct.
Seymour, Sir H.
Seymour, Lord
Sheil, rt. hon. R. L.
Shelburne, Earl of
Simeon, J.
Smith, rt. hon. R. V.
Smith, J. B.
Smythe, hon. G.
Somerville, rt. hon. Sir W.
Spearman, H. J.
Stansfield, W. R. C.
Stanton, W. H.
Staunton, Sir G. T.
Stuart, Lord D.
Stuart, Lord J.
Stuart, H.
Sutton, J. H. M.
Talfourd, Serj.
Tancred, H. W.
Tenison, E. K.
Tennent, R. J.
Thompson, Col.
Thompson, G.
Thornely, T.
Towneley, J.
Townley, R. G.
Townshend, Capt.
Turner, G. J.
Tynte, Col. C. J. K.
Vane, Lord H.
Wall, C. B.
Ward, H. G.
Watkins, Col. L.
Willcox, B. M.
Wilson, J.
Wilson, M.
Wood, rt. hon. Sir C.
Wood, W. P.
Wrightson, W. B.
Wyld, J.
Wyvill, M.
Young, Sir J.

TELLERS.

Tufnell, H.
Hill, Lord M.

MR. DISRAELI stated that, after this division, he would not press his Amendment to a division. Amendment accordingly withdrawn.

Address agreed to.

IRELAND REVENUE BILL.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, that he rose to move for leave to bring in a Bill to consolidate the Boards of Excise and Taxes into one Board of Commissioners of Inland Revenue, and to make provision for the collection of such revenue. This had already been partly done by the Treasury, and his object was now to carry into complete effect what had already been partially done. He proposed this alteration with a view to public economy. By the consolidation of the Boards of Excise and Stamps and Taxes, he estimated that he would effect a saving of between 70,000*l.* and 80,000*l.* to the public, without at all diminishing the efficiency of those branches of the public revenue.

MR. HERRIES said, that he should be glad that a saving of between 70,000*l.* and 80,000*l.* was effected; and he should be heartily glad indeed if so large an amount was saved without diminishing the security in the collection of those branches of the revenue which the present system afforded. But if that security was at all diminished, he thought it would be dearly purchased by a saving of 70,000*l.* or 80,000*l.* where so large an amount of revenue, namely, from 20,000,000*l.* to 30,000,000*l.*, was involved. As the right hon. Gentleman, however, took it for granted that the new system would work as efficiently as the old, he would not oppose the Motion.

Leave was then given to bring in the Bill, which was read a first time.

WOODS AND FORESTS.

VISCOUNT DUNCAN moved—

"For a Select Committee, to inquire into the expenditure and management of the Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues of the Crown, and to report to the House whether any reductions, alterations, or improvements, may be made in that branch of the Public Revenue and Expenditure; and that the Committee be instructed to include in their inquiry the management of the department of the Works and Buildings, and of any other department over which the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues, Works, and Buildings exercise control."

The EARL of LINCOLN said, that as the noble Lord who represented the Woods and Forests Department was now removed to the other House of Parliament, and as that noble Lord, who, from his position, could best sift the subjects which were likely to come before the Committee, could not sit on it, he wished to know whether the Government would appoint an efficient Member of the Government to represent them on the Committee?

LORD J. RUSSELL said, he was aware of the disadvantage which the absence of Lord Carlisle would occasion. He would, therefore communicate with his noble Friend, and some one of his right hon. Friends would take the place of his noble Friend. Although they would find it difficult to find so efficient a Member as his noble Friend, they would endeavour to supply his place in the best manner they could.

Motion agreed to.

House adjourned at One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, February 5, 1849.

MINUTES.] PUBLIC BILLS.—1ª Bankrupt Law Consolidation; Criminal Law Consolidation; Proceedings against Clergy.

PETITIONS PRESENTED. From the City of Westminster, and several Metropolitan Teetotal Societies, against the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sundays.

ANSWER TO THE ADDRESS.

The LORD STEWARD OF THE HOUSEHOLD (EARL FORTESCUE) acquainted the House that Her Majesty had been pleased to return the following most Gracious Answer to their Lordships' Address:—

> "MY LORDS—I thank you for your Assurances of the Loyalty of My People and their steady Attachment to the Institutions of the Country.
>
> "It will at all Times be My Desire to promote their Happiness and Welfare."

On the Motion of the Earl of SHAFTESBURY, Her Majesty's most Gracious Answer was ordered to be printed and published.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

LORD STANLEY reminded their Lordships that last Session he felt it his duty to advert more than once to the mode of conducting business in that House, and to the great delay in the introduction of measures in that House in the early part of the Session, which created an undue pressure of business, so that, towards the close, when there was a thin attendance, they had more to do than they could satisfactorily accomplish. The measure which he introduced obtained their Lordships' concurrence, though not that of the other House; and he now understood that it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to take some steps in consequence of the recommendations of a Select Committee of that House. That being the case, he was not disposed to take the responsibility of any measure upon himself, until, at all events, he saw what was likely to be the result of the Amendments which he hoped would shortly be introduced into the other House for the despatch of public business. But in order that their Lordships might have before them a practical result of the existing system, he should move for a return, to which he apprehended there would be no objection—namely, a return, in the order of their original introduction, of all Public Bills introduced into either House of Parliament during the Session of 1847-8, distinguishing those introduced into each House respectively, and showing the dates at which each of such Bills passed through each of its stages. This return would show an unfortunate result as to the manner in which public business had been disposed of in both Houses.

Ordered to be laid before the House.

NORTH WALES RAILWAY.

On the Motion of LORD MONTEAGLE,

> "William Chadwick, Esquire, Chairman, and John Mariner, Esquire, late Secretary of the North Wales Railway Company, were called in, in pursuance of the Order of this House of the 5th of September last, and were examined as to their not having produced certain Accounts ordered by this House on the 3rd and 25th of August last, and also as to their not having attended at the Bar of this House, pursuant to Orders of this House of the 31st of August and 4th of September last: They delivered in certain Accounts."

In answer to the LORD CHANCELLOR, Mr. Chadwick stated he had no intention of disobeying their Lordships' order; but the accounts in question were now the subject of proceedings in Chancery, and he hoped their production would not be pressed.

The parties having been ordered to withdraw,

LORD MONTEAGLE expressed his surprise at the explanation that had been given. In the course of last Session, in the early part of July, a question was raised with regard to the conduct of railway directors and railway companies in the application or misapplication of their funds, which induced their Lordships to make an order for the production of certain documents relative to the accounts of the North Wales Railway. That order was served, by the officers of the House, upon the parties whose immediate duty it was to obey it; and they made no remonstrance to the production of the accounts. If any papers had been called for which tended in the slightest degree to interrupt the course of justice, nothing could have been more easy than to have petitioned the House, upon that ground, to rescind the order. No such steps, however, were taken, but rather the contrary. The order was made on the 3rd of August. It was disobeyed; and on the 23rd of August a peremptory order was made for the production of the documents forthwith. No statement of the kind now made was then offered. The Session being near its termination, notice was given to the parties to attend at the bar this day, to produce the papers in question, and offer any explanation which they could of their neglect to obey the previous orders of the House. No sooner was that order made, than a letter was addressed to himself, and to the Railway Department of the Board of Trade, by the Secretary of the Company, to the following effect:—

> "August 31.—I am directed immediately to comply with the requirements contained in your Lordships' order of the 25th instant, and to inform your Lordships that a letter has been sent, to that effect, to Captain Harness, of the Railway Department of the Board of Trade."

The intention of this letter was to deceive and blind the House as to the future course the parties would take. And now they appeared at the bar, saying they were ready to produce copies of bills in Chancery. What was this intended for, but to be a bar to the powers of the House? Such a proceeding had never yet been exhibited before their Lordships, and he called upon the House not to yield to it. He had called for the papers upon public grounds, for the purpose of establishing a fact which, the House agreed with him, was deserving of public attention, namely, that the present system of railway accounts ought to be improved by an effective system of audit. But he put it to their Lordships, whether they could entertain the excuse that had been made for not complying with their order. What might be done with the papers when they were produced, it was not for him to say. At all events, he would recommend the House to insist upon their production, to have them printed, and give the parties notice to attend upon a future day in case their examination should be necessary.

The LORD CHANCELLOR said, there could be no doubt that where the House made an order for the production of papers, no person having the papers could decline to produce them. So long as the order stood, it must, beyond all question, be enforced. But it was quite another consideration whether their Lordships would consent to enforce it after they had been told they were in the nature of accounts—of which they knew nothing before—that were the subject of proceedings in a court of equity. He apprehended there had been some misconception on this point when the order was made.

LORD MONTEAGLE explained that the House had distinctly before it, when the order was made, what were the accounts desired. They were simply extracts from the Company's books, which, by law, they were compelled to leave open for the inspection of every shareholder.

LORD BROUGHAM remarked, that the Chairman of the Company did not refuse to produce the accounts. He merely said there was a cause pending in which the accounts were documents.

The MARQUESS of LANSDOWNE said, the accounts had been called for by an order of that House. The order had not been obeyed; there could be no doubt, therefore, that a direct contempt had been committed.

After a few words from LORD CAMPBELL, who was of opinion that the papers ought to be laid upon the table,

The MARQUESS of CLANRICARDE thought the proper course would be to call —first, for an explanation of the cause of delay, and the reason for the non-production of the papers; and then, if their Lordships saw fit, to call for the papers.

The Chairman and Secretary of the North Wales Railway Company were again called to the bar, and subjected to an examination by Lord Monteagle, Lord Brougham, Lord Minto, and other noble Lords, chiefly with regard to the date at which the order of the House for the production of the papers had been served, and to the reasons for delay. The Chairman of the Company explained, during the examination, that the directors lived in different parts of England, and it was difficult to get them together at a meeting. The order of their Lordships had been served upon Mr. Mariner, the Secretary, who had communicated the same to the chairman; and he had not made any objection to complying with the order. Mr. Mariner had not considered it an order of the House of Lords, but thought it emanated from the Railway Department of the Board of Trade; and the Chairman also stated, that the Secretary had communicated the document to him as an order from the Board of Trade; and that it was unusual to comply with such orders until they had been laid before a meeting of the directors. Upon reading the paper, however, it appeared from the heading, that it was an order proceeding from the "Lords Spiritual and Temporal," and

Lord BROUGHAM intimated to the gentlemen at the bar, that when they received an order of either House of Parliament, it was their bounden duty to obey it, without reference to calling any meeting of their own body.

The witnesses, after some further questioning, were ordered to withdraw, when

Lord MONTEAGLE moved, that the evidence be printed, and that their Lordships should take the evidence of their own officers with respect to the service of the order, and that the witnesses be directed to attend at the bar on that day week.

The Motion agreed to.

House adjourned till To-morrow.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, February 5, 1848.

Minutes.] New Member Sworn. For Derby, Lawrence Heyworth, Esq.

Petitions Presented. From William Bullock, of Biggar, Lanarkshire, for the Adoption of Universal Suffrage.—By Mr. Parker, from Sheffield, for an Alteration of the Law respecting the Church of England Clergy.—By Sir W. Somerville, from the Roman Catholic Bishops of Ireland, for an Alteration of the Law respecting Marriages (Ireland).—By Sir R. H. Inglis, from the Bath Church of England Lay Association, against the Endowment of the Roman Catholic Clergy.—By Sir W. Molesworth, from Merchants, Planters, Traders, and Others, of the Island of Ceylon, praying for Reformatory Measures for that Colony; also from Inhabitants of the same Place, for a Reduction of the Duty on Coffee.—By Mr. Ellis, from Members of the Congregation of the United Christian Church, Marturia Chapel, Reading, for a Reduction of the Duties on Tea, Sugar, and Coffee.—By Mr. F. O'Connor, from John Dillon, for Inquiry into his Case.—By Sir W. Somerville, from the Board of Guardians of the Union of Kilmallock, in the County of Limerick, for an Alteration of the Law respecting the Leases for Lives (Ireland).—By Colonel Dunne, from the Borough of Portarlington, and its Neighbourhood; and by Mr. W. Fagan, from the Board of Guardians of the Cork Union, for Inquiry into the Working of the Poor Law (Ireland).—By Mr. Tufnell, from the Parish of East Stonehouse, Devonshire, for an Alteration of the Sale of Beer Act.—By Mr. Shafto Adair, from Woodbridge, Suffolk, for Referring War Disputes to Arbitration.

ALLEGED BREACH OF PRIVILEGE— LORD CLARENDON'S LETTER.

Mr. J. O'CONNELL said, he did not know whether that was the time for submitting to the House a matter which he considered to be a breach of privilege. He wished to draw the attention of the House to a document he held in his hand, and which he must say, under all the circumstances of the case, he really did hope would turn out to be a breach of the privileges of that House, and a fabrication. A copy had been left at his residence of a printed paper, purporting to be presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty, and to be a letter from the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, He should conclude his remarks, by moving

> "That William Clowes, the printer of this document, be called to the bar of this House, to answer for himself and his instigators to such a breach of privilege."

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman has not mentioned to me his intention of making a Motion of this description, and I was not aware, till he rose, of the nature of the paper of which he complains: but I understand him to allude to a paper presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty. It cannot, therefore, in any way be a breach of the privileges of this House.

Lord J. RUSSELL: I beg to say it is an authentic document, passing between two Members of Her Majesty's Government, and presented to both Houses by command of Her Majesty.

Mr. J. O'CONNELL said, he was then reduced to moving that the House do now adjourn. ["Oh, oh!"] He believed he was perfectly in order, and that he could now proceed with his observations. He must denounce the paper of which he spoke as a most unconstitutional document. It was hardly creditable that a paper containing such propositions should have proceeded from one Member of the Government, or that it should have been sent to another. At the risk of his unpopularity he had no hesitation in saying that the document was unconstitutional, yet they were assured by the First Minister of the Crown that it was authentic.

MR. HENRY DRUMMOND: I rise to order. I beg to know if the hon. Member's observations relate to the question of adjournment?

MR. SPEAKER: Certainly the observations we have just heard from the hon. Member do not relate to the question of adjournment.

MR. J. O'CONNELL thought the question involved in the document, of such grave importance that the dignity of the House would be best consulted by an immediate adjournment, for the purpose of giving consideration to the document which he had to bring under their attention. And he put his Motion on that ground; therefore, being in order, he must beg to say that if the House did inherit any of the spirit of its predecessors, the present was the occasion on which it could be best displayed. History informed him that the House of Commons had always been nobly jealous of the liberty of the subject, and of the integrity of the constitution. If the liberty of the subject was not a mere pretence, he must then say that there were serious grounds for considering whether there was not matter enough to frame an impeachment of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. If the fatal precedent now offered was accepted—if the liberties of Ireland were to be complimented away at the beck and will of one man, where, might he ask, were the Irish people? It was an entire mockery of admitting the Irish to equal rights, if such a document as he had to bring under the notice of the House was admitted. The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland had shown himself completely ignorant of the condition of the country which he governed. He had been guilty of grave misdemeanor in giving vent to such recommendations as he had done with regard to the people of Ireland. The Lord Lieutenant called upon the Legislature to agree, out of compliment to him, to vote away the liberties of the Irish people. Now, let it be clearly understood, he (Mr. J. O'Connell) did not deny the capacity of the noble Lord; but he denied his merits as a governor of Ireland. What was it that the document of which he had to express his condemnation contained? The head of the Executive Government in Ireland was therein seen to take upon himself to declare that a constitutional object was unattainable in Ireland, and therefore that the people of Ireland were to be deprived of their constitutional rights. In the sixth paragraph, the mask was thrown off. There was a plain confession that the Lord Lieutenant recommended the destruction of the constitution of Ireland—that the high privilege of personal security was to be done away with—and this, in order to put an end to political excitement and agitation. The words used by the Lord Lieutenant, in his letter to the Home Secretary were to the effect, that, in order to procure for Ireland a respite from the agitation for a repeal of the Union, it was necessary to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act. Who was it that had told the noble Lord that a strictly legal object was not to be attained by means of agitation? Was it not monstrous that any Member of the Executive should propose to Parliament an interference with the constitution, with a view to prevent the people seeking for the attainment of a constitutional object? Would the House do what that nobleman called upon them to do, and say that the people should not agitate for the repeal of an Act of Parliament? Would the British House of Commons, jealous of the liberties of the subject, the guardians of the British constitution, asserting themselves to be the legislators not only for England, but also for Scotland and Ireland, consent, on the mere personal recommendation of that nobleman, to trample upon that constitution, and to make a distinction between Englishmen and Irishmen? The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland was seeking to put down an agitation which was already out of itself—which was utterly extinct. Not a spark of the ancient fire was now to be seen; the agitation had no vitality in it; and the Lord Lieutenant called upon the House to inflict that gross outrage on the whole of the Irish inhabitants, without even a pretence that the agitation existed at that moment. He (Mr. J. O'Connell) asked for the adjournment of the House, in order that Members might have time to consider the document in question. If Members thought that this matter did not come home to them at this moment, it would, ere long, if this precedent were established. They themselves thought that there could not have been a worse indication exhibited of the regard of England for Ireland. He contended that there was one law for Ireland and another for England. There was a legislative Government for England, and a dictator and a despot for Ireland. He implored the English representatives to think well over this letter, and not to sanction the unconstitutional and tyrannous propositions which it contained. Something was due to those Irish Gentlemen who had done their best to prevent the Irish insurrection of July last; and for himself he could say, that he had had the proud satisfaction of being able to refer to the testimony of one of those who were engaged in that insurrection, in a letter written from America, that even he, humble individual as he was, had prevented many people from rushing headlong into the vortex. If the Irish people wished for agitation, the recommendations contained in that document would form an excuse perhaps for entering upon it. That document would be the only thing which could revive the scattered elements of that agitation which had wrung Catholic emancipation from a British House of Parliament. It would be a stain and a blot upon the House of Commons if they adopted the recommendations of Lord Clarendon. [*Laughter.*] They might laugh and jeer as they pleased. It was their hour now, but Ireland's hour would come, and they should remember, in the language of the poet —

> "Nought can escape the vigil long
> Of him who treasures up a wrong."

He looked upon this document as most unconstitutional and tyrannous in its nature; and when Ireland's hour should come, the people of that country would hold it in bitter remembrance. He should conclude by moving, that the House do now adjourn.

MR. H. GRATTAN then rose, but as he commenced by stating that it was not his intention to second the Motion, he was immediately met by loud cries of "Order, order!" The hon. Gentleman, however, was endeavouring to proceed, when

MR. SPEAKER said: The hon. Gentleman is out of order. There is no question before the House.

MR. GRATTAN then resumed his seat, and the Motion fell to the ground for want of a seconder.

SESSIONAL ORDERS.

LORD JOHN RUSSELL rose for the purpose of moving the Sessional Resolutions; and as it was proposed to adopt some alterations in them, at the suggestion of the Committee which sat last year on the despatch of public business, he would take the liberty of saying a few words in introducing the Motion to the notice of the House. The first resolution was that which had been in operation in former years, giving Orders of the Day precedence of Notices of Motion on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays; and to this resolution he believed no objection would be offered. The 2nd and 3rd Resolutions, giving Mr. Speaker power to direct the Orders of the Day to be read at the proper time without any question being put, and the orders to be disposed of in the order in which they stood on the Paper, the right being reserved to Her Majesty's Ministers of placing Government orders at the head of the list on the days when Government Bills had precedence, had both been adopted last Session, on the Motion of the hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume); and he did not know that any complaint had been made as to their working. He did not, therefore, think it necessary to make any observations with reference to them. The 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th Resolutions had been likewise in operation for some years, and did not, he believed, require any particular notice. The 9th Resolution was one that had been agreed to by the Committee on Public Business of last Session, and was to the effect—

"9. *Resolved*—That when any Bill shall be presented by a Member, in pursuance of an Order of this House, or shall be brought from the Lords, the Questions 'That this Bill be now read a first time,' and 'That the Bill be printed,' shall be decided without Amendment or Debate."

That was also a resolution which he hoped would not be objected to, and which tended to facilitate the transaction of public business. The 10th Resolution was—

"10. *Resolved*—That the Committees of Supply, and Ways and Means, shall be fixed for Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and for any other day on which Orders of the Day shall have precedence of Notices of Motions, of which notice shall have been given on the preceding Friday."

That was a resolution, the adoption of which, he thought, would be of considerable advantage, without leading to any material inconvenience; and he certainly did not see why Committees of Supply should be on all occasions limited to three days in the week—namely, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. He hoped, therefore, that this resolution would meet with the approbation of the House. The 11th Resolution was to the effect that—

"11. *Resolved*—That when a Bill or other matter (except Supply or Ways and Means) has been partly considered in Committee, and the Chairman has been directed to report progress and ask leave to sit again, and the House shall have ordered that the Committee shall sit again on a particular day, the Speaker shall, when the Order for the Committee has been read, forthwith leave the Chair without putting any Question, and the House shall thereupon resolve itself into such Committee."

It had been found to be a very inconvenient practice, and one that certainly did not tend to the despatch of business, that after the House had resolved, perhaps after considerable debate, to go into Committee on a Bill, and had gone through, he would suppose, some one, two, or three clauses, the House should have again to discuss whether they would go into Committee on the Bill, before the remaining clauses could be considered. That practice had led to great inconvenience and to much interruption of the business of the House; and the only advantage to which it could lead was, he thought, provided for by the words introduced at the end of the resolution, making an exception in case a Member gave notice of an instruction to such Committee. The 12th Resolution was—

> "12. *Resolved*—That at the close of the Proceedings of a Committee of the whole House on a Bill, the Chairman shall report the Bill forthwith to the House, and when Amendments shall have been made thereto, the same shall be received without debate, and a time appointed for taking the same into consideration."

The object of this resolution was to provide against the inconvenience arising from the practice of considering separately the report on the Bill itself, and on the Amendments made to it; and if the resolution were agreed to, the House would be asked merely to agree, conditionally, to the whole Bill as amended, leaving the further consideration of the Bill to another day. He hoped the resolution would be agreed to, as he regarded the practice of entangling the Amendments made in Committee with the principle of the Bill as one which had led to great inconvenience. The next resolution was one of more importance, and had reference to the question of privileges. But the fact was, that the privileges of that House had been very carefully considered by the Committee, and their suggestions had at first gone much further than the resolution now to be proposed. The Resolution was as follows:—

> "13. That with respect to any Bill brought to this House from the House of Lords, or returned by the House of Lords to this House, with Amendments, whereby any pecuniary penalty, forfeiture, or fee, shall be authorised, imposed, appropriated, regulated, varied, or extinguished, this House will not insist on its ancient and undoubted privileges in the following cases:
>
> "1. When the object of such pecuniary penalty or forfeiture is to secure the execution of the Act, or the punishment or prevention of offences:
>
> "2. Where such fees are imposed in respect of benefit taken or service rendered under the Act, and in order to the execution of the Act, and are not made payable into the Treasury or Exchequer, or in aid of the Public Revenue, and do not form the ground of public accounting by the parties receiving the same, either in respect of deficit or surplus:
>
> "3. When such Bill shall be a Private Bill for a Local or Personal Act:"—

In reference to this resolution he might remark, that his hon. Friend who was Chairman of the Committee of Public Business last year (Mr. Evelyn Denison), had written to him that day, expressing his great regret at being unable to attend in his place in order to give his support to this resolution. The only remaining resolution was the 14th, which provided that after Tuesday the 1st day of May next, Orders of the Day shall have precedence of Notices of Motions on Thursdays, the right being reserved to Her Majesty's Ministers of placing Government Orders at the head of the list, as on Mondays and Fridays. It certainly appeared to him that those who represented the Government in that House were obliged, in the early part of the Session, to labour under great disadvantage, as it had been the custom for many years past—though not in former times—to look to the Government, not only for moving Committees of Supply and of Ways and Means, but also the House expected from them the duty of bringing forward the principal measures of public business. Now, for all these purposes, the Government had only two days of the week at their disposal, while other Members of the House were given three days. That rule had always to be departed from at a late period of the Session; and after the time fixed in the resolution, it was not, he thought, unreasonable that the Government should be allowed three days in each week, as compared with two days allowed for other business. They would also endeavour to attain the object sought for through this resolution by other means, such as sending a proportionate number of Bills to the House of Lords when they would have a chance of being fairly considered in the Upper House, and pressing forward other measures with as little delay as possible. He believed that the resolutions which he had now the honour to propose would lead to the more easy transaction of public business, without at the same time interfering with the power of discussion so necessary in that House; and he would much rather submit them all to the general sense of the House now, at the beginning of the Session, than leave the adoption of each resolution till such time as it would become immediately necessary.

The First Resolution was then read—

"1. *Resolved*—That in the present Session of Parliament all Orders of the Day, set down in the Order-book for Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, shall be disposed of before the House will proceed upon any Motions of which Notices shall have been given."

On the Motion that the Resolution be adopted,

Mr. GOULBURN said, that he thought there were some alterations which might be judiciously introduced into the resolutions, and which would aid in carrying out the object which the noble Lord had in view—that of facilitating the despatch of public business; and it might be more convenient if he were to state the purport of them at that stage, instead of waiting until each resolution was proposed. With regard to the 3rd Resolution, which had been somewhat hastily adopted last Session for the first time, the language of it was, he thought, rather obscure. By it the right was reserved to Her Majesty's Ministers to place Government Orders at the head of the list in the rotation in which they were to be taken, on the days on which Government Bills had precedence; but then the difficulty arose, what was a Government Order, or a Government Bill? Was it intended to apply only to Bills introduced by the Government? He thought it would be desirable to alter the wording of the resolution so as to leave Her Majesty's Ministers at liberty to have all Orders taken in the order in which they were placed on the Paper. The next alteration which he would suggest was in the 10th Resolution, which relates to the appointment of Committees of Supply and of Ways and Means. He believed that the former arrangement had been made in order that Members might know when votes on particular subjects, in which they felt an interest, were likely to come on; but at the same time he (Mr. Goulburn) quite agreed with the noble Lord, that from the practice of discussing notices of Motion on going into Committee of Supply, the Government business was very materially impeded. But he thought that by a slight alteration in the resolution, both objects might be secured. He would suggest that the 10th Resolution should stand as follows:—

"That the Committees of Supply and Ways and Means may be appointed to sit on any Monday, Wednesday, or Friday, or on any other day of which notice shall have been given on the preceding Friday."

By the adoption of this arrangement, hon. Members would have from Friday until after the following Monday to arrange for attending in their places, and the danger of any votes being carried by surprise would be guarded against. With respect to the next resolution, which provided that the House having once gone into Committee on a Bill, the Chairman should not be again required to put the question on going into Committee on the same Bill, he entirely concurred in the propriety of such an arrangement. It was, in fact, only applying to a public Bill the practice which now prevailed with regard to private Bills, as when a private Bill was once sent before a Committee upstairs, the Committee had power to meet from day to day, until the business was disposed of. He would, however, recommend that the concluding words of the resolution, as read by the noble Lord, "unless a Member shall have given notice of an instruction to such Committee," should be omitted. Such a notice could only be necessary when a Member intended to introduce a clause at variance with the principle of the Bill; and it surely was not too much to require that a Member, having such a resolution to propose, should make up his mind with regard to it before the Chairman first took the chair. The only other point on which he would trespass upon the time of the House was with regard to the last resolution. He doubted whether it was right to fix at present the period after which the Government should take a day in each week from the notice of Motion days, until they had some experience in the first instance of the probable progress of public business. He had thought it necessary to throw out these few observations for the consideration of the House and of the noble Lord, as tending to promote the object which they all had alike in view, that of facilitating the transaction of public business.

Sir R. H. INGLIS said, that on the first resolution he apprehended there would be no difference of opinion. There would also be probably no opposition to the second and third resolutions. As to the fourth resolution, he did not exactly understand it, and he thought it would be better if the apparent ambiguity was explained. The Fifth Resolution—

> "That the House do meet every Wednesday, at Twelve o'clock at noon, for private business, petitions, and orders of the day, and do continue to sit until Six o'clock, unless previously adjourned,"—

was one of a more important character. He was perfectly aware of the immense convenience which the adoption of that resolution was to individual Members, and to the officers of the House; and how important it was for them not to be forced to the necessity of sitting up every night in the week to such late hours as on last Thursday and Friday, for instance; but still he always felt the strongest objection to the House and its several Committees sitting at the same time on the same day. It was so contrary to the original intention and rule of the House, that, whenever the House met at Twelve, its special leave must be obtained "for the sitting of Committees notwithstanding the sitting of the House." Yet the resolution now proposed provided, that, on Wednesdays at all events, the House should always sit at the same hour with its Committees. He did not know in what way this evil could be remedied, except by the House resolving to limit the nature of its business on those days, and especially to limit the number of those Bills that stood for second reading on Wednesdays. If Her Majesty's Ministers wished to reject a Bill, they should, he also thought, make up their minds to divide against it on the Motion for leave to bring it in; and thus put the Member introducing it out of pain, by letting him know its fate at once, instead of suffering it to pass that stage without a division, and then taking the sense of the House on a subsequent stage. He should say nothing as to the next three resolutions; but with regard to the ninth resolution there appeared to be some ambiguity, because he had heard it contended for by one individual that day, that it would give to Members the privilege enjoyed in the other House of Parliament, of presenting a Bill to the House without first asking its leave. Having, however, consulted the highest authority in the House on the point, he (Sir R. H. Inglis) was aware that the intention was not so; but still he thought the wording ought to be made somewhat more intelligible by introducing some such phrase as, "provided always that leave shall have been given for the introduction of such Bill," and order passed accordingly. He would wish to alter the twelfth resolution, by substituting the word "received" for "agreed to conditionally without debate." The most important question in the whole of these resolutions was that involved in the thirteenth resolution; and with reference to it, he might be allowed to remind the House, that a resolution suggested by the highest authority in that House, of a much wider character than that now proposed, had been adopted by the Committee of last Session; and he would wish, not for the convenience of the other House of Parliament, but for the sake of promoting the public business, that that resolution should be now adopted. The meeting of the Committee at which the resolution to which he referred had been adopted was attended by the following hon. Members (and he mentioned their names in order to satisfy the House that they included Gentlemen who had paid considerable attention to the subject):—Lord John Russell, Sir James Graham, Sir George Grey, Mr. Disraeli, the Lord Advocate, Mr. Goulburn, Mr. Bernal, Sir Wm. Heathcote, Mr. Cobden, Mr. Brotherton, Mr. Henley, Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Greene, and himself, besides the Chairman, Mr. Evelyn Denison. The Resolution was—

> "That in order to facilitate the passing of Bills through Parliament, this House will not, after the present Session, insist upon its privileges in respect of any Bills, clauses, or amendments, which may be brought from the House of Lords, whereby tolls, rates, or duties are authorised, imposed, or regulated, provided the same shall be assessed and levied by local authorities, and for local purposes, and shall not be applied to the public service."

The highest authority in the House, in recommending the adoption of that resolution, expressed himself as follows:—

> "I believe this House, with the most perfect safety, might abandon the privilege of insisting that all Bills imposing local rates and taxes should commence in the House of Commons, and that the effect of such a relaxation would be, that the business of the Session would be distributed more evenly between the two Houses; that the House of Commons would not be incommoded, as at present, by a great mass of legislation, private and public, at the commencement of a Session; and that many Bills, such as Railway and Canal Bills, Turnpike Bills, Highway Bills, Poor-law Bills, and other Bills of that character, might be matured in the Lords, and come down in a more perfect state for the consideration of the House of Commons later in the Session. I must here observe, that we have frequently been obliged to waive our privileges with regard to Poor-law Bills and to Municipal Bills. We were obliged to waive our privileges on the English Poor-law Bill, on the English Municipal Bill, and on the Irish Poor-law Bill. There is a Bill just returned from the Lords, called the Evicted Tenants Bill, which

has been amended by the Lords, and this House cannot entertain those amendments without waiving its privilege. It has therefore, been found so impossible to maintain this privilege, that I believe the wisest course would be to abandon it."

In that opinion he (Sir R. H. Inglis) most cordially concurred; but it so happened that a few days after the resolution had been agreed to in the Committee, a meeting of the Committee took place, at which Sir R. Peel and Mr. Hume attended, Lord John Russell and others being absent; and then, though the meeting was a much smaller one than the preceding meeting, the former resolution, on the motion of Mr. Hume, was rescinded. Hoping that the resolutions would be submitted to the House, *seriatim*, and calmly considered, he would not trespass farther on their indulgence for the present.

The First Resolution was then agreed to.

On the question that the Second Resolution be adopted as follows :—

. "2. *Resolved*—That at the time fixed for the commencement of Public Business, on days on which Orders have precedence of Notices of Motions ; and after the Notices of Motions have been disposed of on all other days, Mr. Speaker do direct the Clerk at the Table to read the Orders of the Day without any Question being put ;"—

MR. HUME said, that this resolution had been originally submitted by him to the House as an experiment, and though he certainly considered such a step necessary at the time, he felt bound to admit that many hon. Gentlemen who usually acted with him had subsequently expressed their regret that the order had been agreed to. Many of these hon. Gentlemen concurred with him, that the best mode of saving the time of the House would be by limiting the duration of speeches. ["Hear, hear!"] Hon. Gentlemen who cried "hear" would perhaps be surprised to learn that when he brought forward a resolution to that effect in the Committee, though there were seventeen Members present, he could not get one to second his Motion. He was still of opinion that a limit should be put to the length at which individual Members impressed their views on the House; and if the period were fixed at one hour, they would no longer have any necessity for retrenching other privileges which they now found it necessary to abandon. It had been stated, that there were seventeen different stages in which a Member might have an opportunity of making observations on a measure as it passed through the House, and he thought half the number of these stages would be quite sufficient for all practical purposes. But if the House were to agree to the limitation of time he had proposed in Committee, and which he did not mean at the present time to press upon the House, as it had met with so little support in Committee, he thought that they would then be able to allow as many opportunities as at present for Members to join in the debate, and thus avoid the interfering with the privileges of the House. It was not his intention at present to move a resolution on the subject; but at some future time he might try how the opinion of the House agreed with his.

The Resolution was then put and agreed to.

The Third Resolution was—

"3. *Resolved*—That the Orders of the Day be disposed of in the order in which they stand upon the Paper ; the right being reserved to Her Majesty's Ministers of placing Government Orders at the head of the list, in the rotation in which they are to be taken on the days on which Government Bills have precedence."

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER wished to explain that the object of this resolution was, not to give the Government the power of disposing of their Motions before those of private Members, but to give the Government the power of placing their own Motions in such an order as they pleased.

MR. HERRIES said, there might be some difficulty in understanding what were to be considered as Government Orders, as there were many Bills to which that character was given, though they might as well have been introduced by private individuals as by the Government. Of course, there could be no difficulty with regard to Bills of Supply or similar orders; but there were many other Bills which might be improperly attempted to be covered by this word Government. It was hardly a Parliamentary expression at best; and though he did not venture to suggest any alteration, yet he thought the phrase was too vague and loose.

MR. HUME said, that having taken part in this subject formerly, he might state, that by the phrase Government Orders was understood any Bills of which Her Majesty's Ministers had charge, and the public Bills which they brought forward. That was the interpretation which was put upon it at the time; but whether it was a right one or not, he did not pretend to say.

SIR HENRY WILLOUGHBY considered that this resolution was defective on one point, to which he wished to call the attention of the House. There might be twenty Orders of the Day, which Her Majesty's Ministers might have a right to arrange in a certain order; but his suggestion was, whether it would not be wise to limit the time within which orders were to be entertained. Anybody who had watched the business of last Session must know that a great number of new orders were introduced after twelve o'clock at night; and he himself saw a Bill, containing more than one hundred clauses, pass through Committee in ten minutes, when there were not more than eleven Members present. He thought that a time should be fixed, after which no fresh order should be taken up, and he thought that it should be provided that no discussion should take place on any Order of the Day after twelve o'clock.

Mr. EWART said, to his mind the expression "Government Orders" perfectly conveyed the meaning it was intended to convey—that was to say, it meant all Bills introduced by Government. But he thought it would be better if the Amendment of the right hon. Member for Cambridge University were adopted, because that would give the Government the power of putting forward Bills introduced by other Gentlemen.

Mr. GOULBURN thought that at all events the days on which Government Bills were to have precedence ought to be left out.

Sir GEORGE GREY said, that this resolution was precisely similar to the one adopted last Session, and no difficulty had been found in its practical working.

Mr. HUME said, this proposition had been made with a view to give facilities to the public business; but he thought it would be of still greater utility if they dealt with Government as they did with private Bills, which was to fix a certain time beyond which no Government Bill should be received, unless in cases of emergency. Hitherto the practice had too much been to allow the Session to go on with very few Bills, and then towards the close to introduce a great number. Let a day be fixed after which the Government would not be allowed to introduce a Bill; and if any emergency should afterwards arise, it would be easy for the House to suspend its Standing Orders. But if the Government were aware that after a certain day they would not be allowed to introduce any new Bills, they would then pay more attention to their business, and the House would not so often be taken by surprise. A great deal of the crude legislation which had been of late so much complained of, had arisen from the practice of bringing in Bills when the Members of the House were engaged with Committees, and, consequently, very few hon. Members had scarcely time even to read, much less consider them. He thought Her Majesty's Government ought to take it into consideration whether such a resolution would not even be of advantage to themselves, as it would induce those under them who were intrusted with the preparation of their Bills to use more diligence in bringing them forward.

Sir ROBERT PEEL had great objections to the last proposition of the hon. Gentleman. In the first place, he thought it was unwise in them to debate a rule which they foresaw must often be suspended. There was always a great tendency to relax the authority of a rule which was liable to frequent suspension; and any one who had experience in public business must foresee that if they laid down a rule that all Government Bills must be introduced by the last day of March, there would be constant applications for the suspension of that rule. Unforeseen events were constantly occuring, and no doubt could be entertained that in that case the rule must be suspended. But, besides this, he doubted the policy of introducing a great number of Bills at once; he thought it was much better that the Government should introduce only a few Bills, which the Government were determined to pass, rather than to distract the attention of the House with a great number at a time.

Mr. HUME said, he had no wish to perplex the attention of the House with a load of business at a time. On the contrary, he recollected that the opinion of the Committee, of which he was a Member, was unanimous that when a Bill was once introduced it should be prosecuted *de die in diem*, instead of allowing it to stand over for several days while other subjects were introduced. He had no wish, therefore, to cumber the House with many Bills before them at once; but what he wanted was, that Government should let them know in reasonable time all that they intended to bring forward. He did not fix upon the 1st of March: he would say the 1st of August, or the 1st of July. He did not mean to press the suggestion; he only wished to lay his views before the House.

The Resolution was then agreed to.

The Fourth Resolution was—

> " 4. *Resolved*—That no Notice shall be given beyond the period which shall include the four days next following on which Notices are entitled to precedence ; due allowance being made for any intervening adjournment of the House, and the period being in that case so far extended as to include four Notice days falling during the sitting of the House."

The Resolution, after a few words from **Mr. HERRIES**, was agreed to.

The Fifth Resolution was—

> " 5. *Resolved*—That the House do meet every Wednesday at Twelve o'clock at noon, for private Business, Petitions, Orders of the Day, and Notices of Motions, and do continue to sit until Six o'clock, unless previously adjourned."

Mr. LAW said, he wished to make a suggestion with regard to this resolution. He ventured to submit that it was desirable to except from the Orders of the Day, which might be discussed on Wednesdays, such Bills as involved the repeal of public statutes. The greater part of the Wednesdays last Session had been taken up with discussing measures of this nature, when Members were harassed by being continually brought down to the House to discuss a Bill on which nothing was determined, owing to the uncertainty of attendance of Members on Committees. If a measure was of importance enough to be pressed forward on Wednesdays, the Government ought either to take charge of it, or at least to express their opinion fully with regard to it. He submitted that it required a full attendance of Members whenever it was proposed to change an existing law; and therefore, it was a very improper measure to be brought forward on a Wednesday, when numbers of Members were excluded by other important business from attending. He ventured to suggest that they ought to except from this resolution all Bills the object of which was to repeal the public statutes.

Colonel SIBTHORP rose to observe, that Wednesday was a day generally appropriated to the smuggling of Bills through the House, and to the malappropriation of the public money. The Members of Government usually came down on that day, and availed themselves of an empty House to smuggle through their Bills or to malappropriate the money of the public. He had seen business of the utmost importance going on in the House when there were not more than twelve or thirteen Members present. He had been too lenient, too gentle, too merciful, he would say, to the malappropriation of public money, and to the desire of Government to smuggle their measures through the House. He agreed with the suggestions of his right hon. Friend, and he hoped that he would attempt to restrain these proceedings of Government, in taking advantage of the thin attendance of Members for their own ends.

Mr. EWART thought, that if the objections of the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Law) were of value, they ought to be carried further, and to apply to all business of an important nature that was brought before the House. In opposition to the observations of the hon. and learned Gentleman, he would place the recorded opinion of the Speaker, who stated before the Committee, that of all days in the week, the debates on Wednesday were conducted in the most satisfactory manner; and he particularly cited the discussion on the Factory Bill, as one where there was the most close attention to the subject, and the greatest amount of well-balanced argument that he had ever listened to. For his part, he was content with this expression of opinion, and he saw no reason whatever for the proposition of the learned Recorder.

The Resolution was then agreed to; as were also the following, without discussion:—

> "6. *Resolved*—That when such business has been disposed of, at Six o'clock precisely, notwithstanding there may be business under discussion, Mr. Speaker do adjourn the House without putting any Question.
>
> " 7. *Resolved*—That whenever the House shall be in Committee on Wednesday at Six o'clock, the Chairman do immediately report progress, and Mr. Speaker do resume the Chair, and adjourn the House, without putting any Question.
>
> "8. *Resolved*—That the Business under discussion, and any Business not disposed of at the time of such Adjournment, do stand as Orders of the Day for the next day on which the House shall sit."

On the Ninth Resolution—

> "9. *Resolved*—That when any Bill shall be presented by a Member, in pursuance of an Order of this House, or shall be brought from the Lords, the Questions 'That this Bill be now read a first time,' and 'That the Bill be printed,' shall be decided without Amendment or Debate."

Mr. VERNON SMITH said, as this was the first of what might be called the new resolutions, he wished now to express his opinion that he did not think that this resolution standing alone, would answer the end which the House had in view. There was no one question which so much occupied the attention of the country, at the present day, as the despatch of public business. He thought that the appointment of the Committee, which was proposed by an hon. Member, whom he did not now see in his place, was an excellent one; but its appointment was so late in the Session—the month of July—that they had come to a somewhat hasty decision, and he thought that Committee might be reappointed with advantage during the present Session. In their report the Committee had thrown the burden of the subject upon the Government, and the Government seemed now to have thrown back the burden upon the Committee, for they confined themselves entirely to the suggestions which the Committee had made. In these resolutions they proposed to alter the old laws which guided the proceedings of the House; but they did not alter the old causes which delayed the despatch of business. He would venture to say, that if they examined the pages of *Hansard*, they would find that very few debates indeed had taken place on bringing in a Bill, but the delays had taken place on the excessive adjournments, and the speaking of the same Members on the various stages of a Bill. His hon. Friend the Member for Salford (Mr. Brotherton) had made a suggestion, that if the adjournment was moved before all the Orders of the Day were disposed of, such Motion should not be entertained, unless twenty-one Members stood up in their places to signify their assent to the Motion. What happened on that proposition? The Committee decided upon it, six to six: among those in favour of it, were the noble Member for London (Lord John Russell), for Liverpool (Mr. Cardwell), and the West Riding (Mr. Cobden), and other Members of influence. The numbers being equal, the Chairman gave his casting vote in its favour, and it was accordingly carried, yet it was not reported to the House; and it now appeared that Her Majesty's Government had not taken it up. He hoped, however, that his hon. Friend would himself bring the matter before the House. He repeated, that their attention ought to be directed, not so much to shorten the stages through which Bills were to pass, as to curtail those monster debates which now took place upon almost every subject. He would also suggest to Her Majesty's Ministers, that though they had drawn a line of separation between Order days and Notice days, yet he hoped they had not so much separated between them in their own minds but that they might avail themselves of Notice nights, when there was no business, to bring on their own orders. In the month of February, last Session, the House rose at from six to seven almost every Tuesday evening, and all these days were lost to the business of the country, which might have been avoided if Government had put down their own business for transaction on each of these nights. Even on the nights when the House was counted out, he still thought the blame ought to rest on the Ministers, because if they had business to transact they would keep a House. He thought the proposition of the hon. Member for Montrose, limiting the time allowed to speakers, was deserving of attention, and he trusted he would persevere in bringing it before the House.

Mr. BROTHERTON said, he should be happy to bring his proposition before the House, if he thought it would meet with general support. What he wanted was to prevent hon. Members from moving the adjournment of the House merely for the sake of discussing some question which they could not otherwise introduce; he thought that was wrong, and that the House would do well to adopt some resolution to prevent it. He did not complain of the Committee for not reporting his resolution to the House; for he thought it was not a desirable thing to alter old established rules, except with the general concurrence of the House. If he found reason to believe, that a great majority of Members were in its favour, he would press it upon the attention of the House.

Mr. HENRY DRUMMOND said, that any proposition to curtail the privileges of debate, should receive from him the most strenuous opposition. This was the only place where a debate was practicable—it was the only place where a one-sided opinion could not be got up—it was the only place where men were made to listen to things they did not like to hear. The real fact was, that the Duke of Wellington had never received an answer to the question he had asked long ago—how, under the Reform Bill, was the Queen's Government to be carried on? and now, as part answer to the question, Her Majesty's Ministers came forward to tell them they were in a dead-lock, and that they did not know how to get out of it. He did not think, however, that the blame of this ought to rest upon Ministers so much as upon the forms of the House. In the first place, what was the use of that thing called the Speech from the Throne, except so far as it related to a plain statement of facts? and, still more, what was the use of debating it? They had been summoned to attend there on Thursday last, and up to that period they had literally done nothing. He must say he differed—he did it with great reluctance—from his right hon. Friend the Member for Tamworth; but he certainly thought that Her Majesty's Ministers ought at the outset of the Session to declare what measures they intended to bring forward. He admitted that circumstances might arise which would justify the departure from the ordinary rules; but the ordinary rule ought to be that all their measures should be brought forward at once, that they might know what they had met about. But he had a stronger objection than this. Their first business was to audit the public accounts; all their other business stood second to that; and if there was not time allowed for that, then he thought the rules of the House did not work well. How that was best to be accomplished, however, was a subject which would require considerable discussion.

MR. WALPOLE said, by this resolution three stages of a Bill were going to be merged into one. He had not the least objection to that; but he would suggest to the noble Lord whether it would not be more advisable to return to what was an old standing order of the House, and to say that no Bill should be presented to the House unless a copy of it had been left with the clerk at least three days before it was moved in the House. Such an order had been agreed to in 1651, and he thought if it were now adopted it would give Members an opportunity of seeing and considering the Bill before leave was asked to bring it in. In this way two advantages would follow: first, no Member would bring in a Bill unless he had first well considered the subject; and in the second place, when a Bill was introduced the House would no longer be left to the vague statement of its contents given by the Member who introduced it.

MR. GOULBURN thought the hon. and learned Member had misunderstood the order of 1651, which had no bearing upon the subject. If this proposition were agreed to, the opponents of a Bill would be apt to go into minute points of detail on the second reading, which would render the debates inconveniently long. He thought they must take the statements of hon. Members on the Bills they introduced, as the material on which the House was to form its judgment.

SIR R. H. INGLIS thought that any measure would be desirable which would induce hon. Members to give some attention to their own legislation. The crude state in which many measures were brought forward was one great cause of delay.

The Resolution was then agreed to, as were the following with some verbal amendments:—

"10. *Resolved*—That the Committees of Supply, and Ways and Means, shall be fixed for Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and for any other day on which Orders of the Day shall have precedence of Notices of Motions, of which notice shall have been given on the preceding Friday.

"11. *Resolved*—That when a Bill or other matter (except Supply or Ways and Means) has been partly considered in Committee, and the Chairman has been directed to report progress and ask leave to sit again, and the House shall have ordered that the Committee shall sit again on a particular day, the Speaker shall, when the Order for the Committee has been read, forthwith leave the Chair without putting any Question, and the House shall thereupon resolve itself into such Committee.

"12. *Resolved*—That at the close of the Proceedings of a Committee of the whole House on a Bill, the Chairman shall report the Bill forthwith to the House, and when Amendments shall have been made thereto, the same shall be received without Debate, and a time appointed for taking the same into consideration.

"13. That with respect to any Bill brought to this House from the House of Lords, or returned by the House of Lords to this House, with Amendments, whereby any pecuniary penalty, forfeiture, or fee, shall be authorised, imposed, appropriated, regulated, varied, or extinguished, this House will not insist on its ancient and undoubted privileges in the following cases:

"1. When the object of such pecuniary penalty or forfeiture is to secure the execution of the Act, or the punishment or prevention of offences.

"2. Where such fees are imposed in respect of benefit taken or service rendered under the Act, and in order to the execution of the Act, and are not made payable into the Treasury or Exchequer, or in aid of the Public Revenue, and do not form the ground of public accounting by the parties receiving the same, either in respect of deficit or surplus.

"3. When such Bill shall be a Private Bill for a Local or Personal Act."

SIR R. H. INGLIS wished to call attention to the resolution originally proposed to the Committee of last year upon the subject of Money Bills in the House of Lords. He considered that the fact of the majority of the Committee having agreed to the resolution of the 17th of July was *primâ facie* evidence of its superior fitness to meet the exigency of the case, and he therefore thought that it should be substituted for the one before the House. Considering the great interest in the better despatch of public business which was excited out of doors, and the great discontent that existed upon the subject of the delays which had latterly taken place, he thought it very desirable that they should give the other House of Parliament an opportunity of introducing Bills, even although some of the measures so introduced might appear to trespass somewhat upon the privileges of that House. He thought it would be well to permit the other House to interfere with money privileges, so long as it did not affect the general burdens of the State, and he therefore should move, as an Amendment, the resolution originally submitted to the Committee. The hon. Baronet concluded by moving an Amendment—

> "To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'in order to facilitate the passing of Bills through Parliament, this House will not insist upon its Privileges in respect of any Bills, Clauses, or Amendments which may be brought from the House of Lords, whereby tolls, rates, or duties are authorised, imposed, or regulated, provided the same shall be assessed and levied by local authorities, and for local purposes, and shall not be applied to the public service.'"

Mr. HUME could not then state the precise nature of the objection to the resolution proposed by the hon. Baronet when it was originally submitted to the Committee. He could only say that, after a discussion of two hours' duration, these words were rescinded. He, therefore, hoped his hon. Friend would postpone his Amendment for the present.

Lord JOHN RUSSELL said, that when the question first came before the Committee, he certainly thought the resolution now proposed by the hon. Baronet would not be objectionable. But the more it was discussed, the more difficult did it appear for the Committee to recommend it. For instance, it was suggested that there were cases in which the House of Lords might introduce a Bill by which a tax might be levied, which, although applied to local objects and not to the general service of the State, might nevertheless affect the subjects of the country generally. Let them suppose, for example, that in Scotland a rate should be levied for the support of schools exclusively for Church purposes, from which Dissenters should be excluded, the object would be local, yet the effect would be generally felt. There were various other cases in which similar and very considerable difficulties might arise. He, therefore, thought it would be much better to adhere to the resolution before the House.

Sir R. H. INGLIS withdrew his Amendment, and the Resolution was agreed to.

> "*Resolved*—That after Tuesday, the 1st day of May next, Orders of the Day shall have precedence of Notices of Motions on Thursdays, the right being reserved to Her Majesty's Ministers of placing Government Orders at the head of the list as on Mondays and Fridays."

Mr. HERRIES said, that the resolution distinguished itself very materially from others, inasmuch as it was proposed to the House by Her Majesty's Government that a power should be surrendered entirely to them which was usually heretofore given only when the pressure of public business required it. Now, to such a course he thought there was very great objection. When the requirements of public business needed the grant, it would be time enough for Her Majesty's Ministers to ask the House for it; but at present he thought they were asking rather too much. Would it not be wise to leave it, as in former Sessions, to the discretion of Parliament, for there really seemed no reason for adopting it at the present period of the Session?

Lord J. RUSSELL should beg to call the attention of the House to the very great change that had taken place of late years in the mode of conducting public business in it. At the beginning of the present century, although public business was by no means so pressing as it had become of late, Orders of the Day had precedence on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays; and it was only now and then that notices of Motion appeared. It was then found that the notices of Motion increased so much that it was no longer possible to carry on business in the existing form; and the House appropriated two days, Mondays and Fridays, exclusively to Orders of the Day, Government business having precedence on those days. But that was done chiefly for the purpose of securing nights for Committees of Supply. And there had been a still greater change since then. Thus, when measures of importance were brought in, whatever might be the Government in office, it was the general opinion that if there were to be legislation on any great subject, it should be undertaken by the Government, and that individual Members had nothing else to do than to approve or to criticise the merits of such measures. That being the case, the House enabled the Government to introduce the estimates, and the supplies for the year; and not only this, but they allowed them to introduce all Bills of importance. This, then, was not a fair distribution of the business. It was not fair that they should have only two days in the week allotted to them; or rather, in other words, that the Government should have only eight days in the course of the month allotted to them, whilst other hon. Members had twelve. He, therefore, thought it would be well if there were some resolution carried at an early period of the Session, giving that which was usually given at some period to the Government, namely, the Thursday. The House would be merely pledged to give at a certain period that which he thought was a very fair demand—means to enable Bills to be sent up from that House to the other House of Parliament in time sufficiently early to enable a fair and full consideration to be given to them. In the present circumstances, he feared that they would find that the Government business could not make any great progress when before the House only two days of the week; but at the same time, if there were attention merely called to the subject by the printing of the resolution, he should be satisfied for the present. He did not wish to press it if the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Herries) thought it would be better postponed to some future time. He (Lord John Russell) had stated his views to the House; and he thought that when, at a future time, he should ask the House to consent to the resolution, he could not be charged with taking them by surprise.

MR. SPEAKER was about to put the question upon the withdrawal of the resolution, when—

MR. MILNER GIBSON rose and said, he thought that was the proper time when they should take into consideration a Motion for the limitation of hon. Members' speeches. The subject was a novelty, and therefore he did not wish to go the length of limiting speeches to half an hour or forty minutes, although he thought about forty minutes would be the best period for limitation; but he would propose, in the first instance, one hour, by way of commencement. If the noble Lord was about to withdraw the resolution, he would, if permitted, propose it as an original Motion: or, if it did not interfere with the views of the noble Lord regarding the resolution, he would move as an Amendment—

> "To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'the Speeches of Members be limited in duration to one hour; but that the introducers of Original Motions, and Ministers of the Crown speaking in reply, be exempted from this rule.'"

A resolution to the same effect had been proposed in the Committee by the hon. Member for the West Riding, but it had been rejected by them. He (Mr. Milner Gibson) hoped his resolution would find more favour with the House.

MR. SPEAKER asked if the right hon. Member for Manchester objected to the withdrawal of the resolution, or consented to it?

MR. MILNER GIBSON, before he could consent to the withdrawal of the resolution, wished to know if the House would allow him to propose his as an original Motion? The subject was before them, and they might as well waive forms and decide upon it at once.

MR. HORSMAN wished to offer a few observations upon the subject before the resolution was withdrawn. In the last Session of Parliament there were no less than forty-nine Bills read a first time after the 1st of August, and there were seventy or eighty Bills passed during the month of August. They had crowded their Statute-book with Acts; and he did not understand that that subject had been brought before the Committee last year. He did not see the weight of all the objections made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite to the limiting of the days for introducing new Bills. There was no occasion for naming a very early day. They might name the 1st of August, for instance; and one of the results would be that when the period was limited, and the day arrived on which the last introduction of Bills could take place, the Session would be felt to be drawing to a close, and that very fact might tend to shorten the Session.

MR. SPEAKER having again put the question, upon the withdrawal of the resolution,

MR. M. GIBSON said, that he should object to the Motion being withdrawn, in order that he might move his own resolution by way of amendment; and, that the House should have an opportunity of expressing an opinion solely upon the merits of the Amendment, he should move to leave out all the words of the noble Lord's resolution after the first word "that."

MR. COBDEN seconded the Amendment.

LORD J. RUSSELL said, that he should not occupy many minutes in discussing the question, and he, therefore, should not transgress the rule of one hour. When the matter had been discussed in the Committee, it was felt by the majority that it would not be convenient to introduce such a rule. He (Lord J. Russell) must confess that sometimes when the House had been teased by the garrulity of some Members, he felt that a time might come when the House would adopt some rule with regard to the limitation of time. He owned, however, that he did not think they could make any condition with regard to Members introducing original Bills, or Ministers of the Crown. He did not think it sufficient to say that Ministers of the Crown, or Members introducing original Bills, should be excepted. Let them suppose a Member of the House urging charges of criminality against another Member of the House who was in office, or who might have lately been in office, or against an individual who, indeed, might not be a member of the House. Would it be fair that a Member should so come forward, and go through a whole history of the conduct of the Governor General of India, or the Board of Admiralty, or the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, for three hours together? going through the events of a long period of time, and making various charges with every advantage of eloquence and address and great proportion of matter; and then that the other Member himself, or the accused not being a member of the House, the advocate of that person, should not be permitted to employ an equal time in his defence. He (Lord John Russell) did not see how they could make such a definition as would enable them to do justice to all parties. If they confined every person to one hour, he thought it would be a better rule than allowing any exceptions to the stringency of the rule. But, at the same time, if it were to be adopted, he begged to submit to their consideration what a loss it would be on many occasions when a great subject was to be opened—when a great financial plan was to be developed, or when some considerable change was to be proposed in the constitution of the country, that the Member proposing it should not have more than one hour in which to propose it and to state his views. And yet if you did not limit everybody you would hardly do justice to the individual, while, if you did limit every one, you would hardly do justice to the subject to be treated. He would not take up the time of the House further upon the subject, but he thought it was possible the time might come when such resolution might be entertained. He hoped, however, that the discretion of the House itself would prevent them from arriving at any such determination, and that in future, as in past times, complete freedom of debate would be one of the greatest privileges of which they could boast.

Mr. TYNTE said, that he thought the love of speaking had increased very much with the perfection to which shorthand writing had attained, and that the House was greatly indebted to those gentlemen up at the back of the chair for the length as well as the accuracy of the debates. It was an inducement to hon. Members to speak when their speeches were sent through the country; and he hoped those gentlemen (the reporters) would use a little patriotic discretion in distinguishing that which was worthy of being reported.

Mr. HUME did not go the length of the noble Lord. The noble Lord trusted to the discretion of hon. Members, but hon. Members had no discretion. He thought speeches should generally not exceed half an hour; and no one should go beyond an hour. He was perfectly satisfied that any one could express all that he had to say in that time.

Sir ROBERT PEEL: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman has a strong feeling that every speech would have been greatly improved if it had been limited to an hour. I must say, I have often heard the hon. Member himself exceed an hour in his speeches. But I quite agree with him that we have all been delinquents in this matter. I think there has been a tendency of late to make speeches of undue length; and I think there are few speeches that would not be improved if they were of less length, and more condensed in argument. I think if there were a general feeling to that effect, it would be much better than a special rule of limitation. If hon. Members should be limited to an hour, I am very much afraid that many would think they had a vested right to that time, and that they would be doing a great favour to the House when they occupied anything less than the full hour. But I am sure I have heard a great many speeches during the long time I have been in Parliament which I should be very sorry to have found subjected to such a rule. Surely there have been speeches made by Mr. Burke, when he was neither proposing a new measure, nor speaking as a Cabinet Minister in reply, which every one would have regretted having been limited to an hour. I have heard speeches from Lord Plunkett exceeding an hour in duration, that I am sure there was not one single extraneous word in—speeches from Mr. Canning, in which there was not one word too much. And, therefore, in attempting by these formal precise rules the limiting of some excesses, you are running the risk of depriving the people of great instruction. My hope is, that we shall all act upon the principle of speaking more briefly, and though some may wish to give effect to a peroration, there might be some condensation of argument. And if the arguments used in the preceding part of a debate were not repeated, a great saving of time might be effected. It would be better, too, if all those hon. Gentlemen who intend to take part in a debate, would take the trouble to attend for the first one or two days of it, and observe the arguments used, replied to, and disposed of. That would be a means of effecting some reform much more useful than a dry rule. I agree with the noble Lord that it would be better to have a rule that would apply universally—that we ought to have no distinction between private Members and the Ministers of the Crown. Above all, make no distinction between those hon. Members who trouble the House with original Motions, and those hon. Members who speak for or against those Motions. Such a plan would be a perfect premium for Motions, as enabling those who brought them forward to speak two hours, whilst those who followed in debate could speak only one. Why, Tuesdays and Thursdays, at least, would always be occupied with Motions, intended to ensure two hours' speeches. But, then, what is the meaning of a "Minister speaking in reply?" Does the phrase include every Minister who replies to a charge, or only the Minister who follows the hon. Gentleman who brings that charge forward? A Minister speaking in reply is to be allowed to speak more than an hour. What does this mean? Suppose a Minister to speak immediately after the speech of an hon. Gentleman attacking the policy of Government — suppose he had spoken more than an hour—is any other Minister to have the same privilege, or is it to be confined to one? I think, Sir, that the adoption of a rule of this kind, without anything like mature consideration, would involve us in the greatest perplexity and embarrassment; and so, on the whole, admitting that there exists a general feeling that we consume rather too much time in discussion, and rather too little in furthering the progress of practical legislation—believing, I say, that opinion to be well founded, and believing it to embody the general sense of the House—witness the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hume), who has offered himself as a sacrifice in the first instance— [Mr. HUME: If you will confine yourself to the rule, I will.] The hon. Gentleman then virtually does acknowledge that he has been in the habit of wasting the time of the House; but seeing, I repeat, that the general feeling of the House is as I have stated it to be, and in the hope that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hume) will set us all a good example, and will not be offended if, as he trespasses upon the fiftieth minute in his own addresses, we give him some token of warning that he is approaching that limit which he wishes to set up—seeing, I say, that such is the general feeling of hon. Members, I think that their wishes will be better carried out by appealing to their sense of fitness and discretion, than by the institution of any arbitrary rule.

SIR R. H. INGLIS said, the professed object of the hon. Member for Manchester was to save the time of the House. But how was that illustrated? It was proposed that one Member should speak upwards of an hour, and that another should speak upwards of an hour, and so on. They would thus multiply speakers and not save time. They would make the maximum time allowed to one Member the minimum time to another; and then every Member would consider himself justified in speaking as long as he was permitted. He hoped the Motion would be negatived.

MR. COBDEN said, that as he had taken part in the Committee on this important subject, he would take the liberty of stating to the House the grounds upon which he would support the Motion. In the Committee there had been a general admission that there was a great grievance in that House, owing to the long delays which took place in carrying on public business; but he believed everybody came out of the Committee with a belief that they (the Committee) had done very little by their report to remedy the evil. He made a Motion in the Committee which had the support of four Members out of the twelve. That Motion was substantially the same as the one now before the House. There had not been a strong feeling against it, nor was there a strong feeling against the system of clôture, the plan adopted in the French Chambers, but there was a feeling that the Committee should consult public opinion. The right hon. Member for Tamworth now rested his hope that Members would limit themselves to a certain time. He (Mr. Cobden) confessed that he had no faith in any such understanding as that, and he believed they were launching themselves on another Session, in the course of which they would have a waste of time. The right hon. Member for Tamworth was quite right in saying that some of the Members of that House were in the habit of repeating the arguments which had been made use of by other Members. He (Mr. Cobden) could speak for himself, and declare that dozens and scores of times he had intended to address the House, but that when he found others said what he intended to say he abstained from speaking. But this was not a general rule. They were flooded with repetitions in that House, and that was the cause of the delay. Then, with reference to the argument made use of by the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) about the necessity of permitting Members of that House to have an unlimited time because a charge might be made upon an important Motion respecting the character or conduct of some absent individual, why that could not be a personal charge, or it could not engage the attention of that House. It must be a charge founded on public policy, and, if it were made on public grounds, the party would either be there to defend himself on public grounds, or it would not rest on one individual to defend him, for there might be a dozen or a score of individuals to defend him. Then, with respect to the proposed privilege of permitting Ministers of the Crown to speak upwards of an hour, why there was some justice in that, for it sometimes happened that the Government were attacked by many Members, and that the Ministers had to sustain an argument against a large party in the House. And, though the whole Government might speak in the course of a discussion in which they were charged, still the Government formed a small fraction of the House, and, therefore, there was no injustice in giving them an unlimited time. But, if they limited the time of speaking generally, they would improve the quality of the speeches—for he might be allowed to say that the fault was, they were much too diffuse—that they did not keep sufficiently to the question before them, and that they overlaid their speeches with too long quotations from *Hansard*, or from books or reports to which all the Members had access as well as the Member making the quotations. A Member frequently entered the House and read and recited long extracts from an armful of books, to which all the Members had access, as well as the Member who read and recited them. He believed, therefore, that if they limited the time of speaking, they should very much improve the quality of their speeches; and of this he was quite sure, that if a Member had anything to say, he could say it in an hour. It was when a Member had nothing to say, or did not know what he was going to say, that he would have occasion to speak for more than an hour. The right hon. Member for Tamworth had referred to the case of Mr. Burke. That was an unhappy instance, for it was well known that Burke generally emptied the House. He was called "the dinner bell;" and it was said that—

> "He went on refining,
> And thought of convincing while they thought of dining."

And he thought if his speeches were cut into four they would read much better than they did. He would limit the time of speaking, for the purpose of saving the time of the House, and the reputation of the House with the country; and, therefore, he would support the Motion.

Mr. NEWDEGATE said, he was in favour of condensing their discussions, but that he was surprised at the quarter from which the present proposition for the arbitrary limitation of speeches to a certain length of time, without reference to the matter contained in them, emanated. Did they not know that the hon. Members for Manchester and for the West Riding had established a system and means for discussing questions out of that House? And it seemed strange that the hon. Member for the West Riding, after repeating the same arguments against the corn laws for seven years, and having succeeded by so doing, should now complain of repetition. It might be disagreeable to him to discuss those questions in a place where there was a difference of opinion; but surely that was salutary for the public, since the laws to which they were to submit were based upon these discussions, which could not but be partial if only one side was heard. He (Mr. Newdegate) had been much struck by an observation which lately appeared in one of the daily publications, which are now so well written, in which it was said of that House "that discussion was going out of doors." He begged the House to consider that great questions would be discussed elsewhere, if not there; and that if the House would not entertain the full discussion of them, they would encourage a system of collecting assemblages elsewhere, who would consider discussion of these great questions their sole province, and that House would become the mere record office for enactments virtually passed elsewhere. He could not pass unnoticed a suggestion which one hon. Member had ventured to make to those who recorded and made public what passed in that House. That hon. Gentleman had ventured to propose that only partial fragments of their discussions should be conveyed to the public. He (Mr. Newdegate) had known some instances in which the speeches on one side only of the discussion had been fully reported; but he trusted that those who fulfilled the important function of informing the public of what passed in that House, would afford the public fair opportunities of judging of the arguments used on either side in discussion, and of the conduct of their representatives.

The House divided on Mr. Gibson's Motion:—Ayes 62; Noes 96: Majority 34.

List of the AYES.

Adair, R. A. S.
Alcock, T.
Bernal, R.
Bouverie, hon. E. P.
Bright, J.
Brotherton, J.
Brown, W.
Busfeild, W.
Cayley, E. S.
Childers, J. W.
Clay, J.
Cobden, R.
Colebrooke, Sir T. E.
Copeland, Ald.
Crawford, W. S.
Duke, Sir J.
Duncan, G.
Ellis, J.
Ewart, W.
Fagan, W.
Foley, J. H. H.
Fordyce, A. D.
Frewen, C. H.
Guest, Sir J.
Haggitt, F. R.
Harris, R.
Hastie, A.
Hastie, A.
Heathcoat, J.
Henry, A.
Heyworth, L.
Hope, A.
Humphery, Ald.
Kershaw, J.
Lacy, H. C.
Littleton, hon. E. R.
Mackinnon, W. A.
Meagher, T.
Mitchell, T. A.
Moffatt, G.
Molesworth, Sir W.
Mowatt, F.
Muntz, G. F.
O'Connor, F.
Rawdon, Col.
St. George, C.
Scrope, G. P.
Sidney, Ald.
Smith, J. B.
Stanley, E.
Stansfield, W. R. C.
Stuart, Lord D.
Sullivan, M.
Tennent, R. J.
Thompson, Col.
Thornely, T.
Trelawny, J. S.
Tynte, Col. C. J.
Willoughby, Sir H.
Wilson, M.
Wood, W. P.
Wyld, J.

TELLERS.
Hume, J.
Milner, G.

List of the NOES.

Anstey, T. C.
Armstrong, Sir A.
Armstrong, R. B.
Baillie, H. J.
Bankes, G.
Barrington, Visct.
Bellew, R. M.
Bennet, P.
Blackall, S. W.
Blair, S.
Buller, Sir J. Y.
Bunbury, E. H.
Charteris, hon. F.
Clerk, hon. Sir G.
Cobbold, J. C.
Cowper, hon. W. F.
Craig, W. G.
Drummond, H.
Dunne, F. P.
Ebrington, Visct.
Elliot, hon. J. E.
Ferguson, Sir R. A.
Floyer, J.
French, F.
Goulburn, rt. hon. H.
Grace, O. D. J.
Graham, rt. hon. Sir J.
Granby, Marq. of
Granger, T. C.
Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.
Grey, R. W.
Hawes, B.
Heald, J.
Herbert, H. A.
Herries, rt. hon. J. C.
Hobhouse, rt. hon. Sir J.
Hobhouse, T. B.
Hogg, Sir J. W.
Hood, Sir A.
Hornby, J.
Horsman, E.
Howard, Lord E.
Inglis, Sir R. H.
Jolliffe, Sir W. G. H.
Labouchere, rt. hon. H.
Legh, G. C.
Lincoln, Earl of
Lockhart, A. E.
M'Gregor, J.
Maitland, T.
Mandeville, Visct.
Masterman, J.
Matheson, A.
Maule, rt. hon. F.
Miles, W.
Morgan, O.
Morison, Sir W.
Newdegate, C. N.
Norreys, Lord
O'Brien, Sir L.
Ossulston, Lord
Pakington, Sir J.
Palmerston, Visct.
Parker, J.
Patten, J. W.
Peel, rt. hon. Sir R.
Pinney, W.
Plowden, W. H. C.
Pugh, D.
Raphael, A.
Rich, H.
Russell, Lord J.
Sadlier, J.
Sandars, G.
Sandars, J.
Sheil, rt. hon. R. L.
Sibthorp, Col.
Somerville, rt. hn. Sir W.
Spooner, R.
Stafford, A.
Strickland, Sir G.
Sutton, J. H. M.
Tancred, H. W.
Tenison, E. K.
Thompson, Ald.
Tyrell, Sir J. T.
Urquhart, D.
Vane, Lord H.
Vyse, R. H. R. H.
Walsh, Sir J. B.
Watkins, Col. L.
Wilson, J.
Wodehouse, E.
Wood, rt. hon. Sir C.
Wrightson, W. B.
Young, Sir J.

TELLERS.
Tufnell, H.
Hill, Lord M.

The Fourteenth Resolution was then withdrawn, and the Sessional Orders, as amended, were read over by the SPEAKER, and agreed to.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO THE SPEECH.

LORD H. VANE having brought up the report on the Address to Her Majesty,

The MARQUESS of GRANBY rose and begged to be indulged with the attention of the House for a few minutes. He laboured under a very strong conviction that the Speech of Her Majesty did not convey a fair representation of the condition of the country with reference to the manufacturing interests and the agricultural districts. He was anxious to make a very few remarks upon that paragraph in the Royal Speech which related to the reductions proposed to be made in the estimates of the country. That paragraph was, "The present aspect of affairs has enabled me to make large reductions on the estimates of last year." Now, he was quite sure that every Member of that House must be most anxious, as far as it was fair and practicable, to reduce the estimates of the present year; but he might be allowed to ask this question—how was it that they were able in the present year, in consequence of the "present aspect of affairs," to reduce the estimates, when last year they had increased them? He had waited to hear, but he had not as yet heard, any reason assigned for a difference between the year 1848 and the year 1849. The Government had not confined themselves to the question of the estimates; but the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) in his speech the other night stated that he proposed to reduce the Army and Navy. He (the noble Marquess) again asked Her Majesty's Prime Minister to say, what was the distinction between this year and last? What was "the present aspect of affairs?" The noble Lord said last year there was a convulsion, but there was no convulsion when the noble Lord then proposed an increase of the Army. On the contrary, it was just at the period the hon. Member for the West Riding had made his celebrated prophecy of universal peace. Well, but what was "the present aspect of affairs?" Why, he found in this very Speech the following paragraph:—

> "A rebellion of a formidable character has broken out in the Punjaub, and the Governor General of India has been compelled, for the preservation of the peace of the country, to assemble a considerable force, which is now engaged in military operations against the insurgents."

Again, he found in the same Speech the following paragraph:—

> "The insurrection in Ireland has not been renewed, but a spirit of disaffection still exists, and I am compelled, to my great regret, to ask for a continuance, for a limited time, of those powers which, in the last Session, you deemed necessary for the preservation of the public tranquillity."

Again, although it was, unfortunately, not mentioned in the Speech, yet there was not a Member present who did not know that the state of our colonial empire was most distressing. All of them knew that many of these dependencies were on the very verge of insurrection. Then, he asked, was it safe and prudent at such a time as this to make large reductions in our Army and Navy? With respect to the omission of all allusion whatever to the distress in the agricultural districts, he could not suppose that Her Majesty's Government were altogether ignorant of the reality and the depth of that distress. What, then, could be their object in making no mention or allusion to it in the Speech from the Throne? Did they think that the conviction which was brewing in men's minds that the free-trade system had been a complete failure, would be crushed by such an omission? He recollected the prophecy made at the time of the passing of those free-trade measures, that wages were to be raised, and that bread was to be had at half-price. How had that prophecy been fulfilled? He held in his hand a statement of the condition of the agricultural classes in the neighbourhood of the county where he lived; and as it was very short, perhaps the House would allow him to read to them the difference in their condition now, and what it was before the free-trade measures passed. The wages in Leicestershire and Lincolnshire were now reduced from 12*s.* to 10*s.* He took a family of five individuals—a husband, wife, and three children—and he presumed that they consumed half a stone of coarse flour per week. The price of flour, when the wages were 12*s.*, was 2*s.* 2*d.* per stone, making for those five individuals 5*s.* 5*d.* The labour would consume three pounds of meat a week at 6½*d.* That would be 1*s.* 7½*d.* a week. The total expense, therefore, of the flour and meat would be 7*s.* 0½*d.* He now took the prices at the present moment, the wages being 10*s.* The two and a half stone of flour now, at 1*s.* 10*d.* per stone, would be 4*s.* 7*d.*; and the meat at 5½*d.*, would be 1*s.* 4½*d.*, the total being 5*s.* 11½*d.* The reduction, therefore, in the price would be 1*s.* 1*d.*, but the reduction in the man's wages was 2*s.*; so that he was worse off now than he was before by 11*d.* per week. The truth was, what was required to meet the evil of the present day was employment; but all the legislative measures of late years had tended to reduce employment at home, and to transfer that employment to the foreigner. How could the farmer be expected, with wheat at 45*s.* per quarter, to lay out capital upon his land, particularly now when competition was staring him in the face. He deeply regretted that Government, if they did not see fit to retrace their steps in relation to their free-trade policy, had not at least thought proper to insert in the Speech from the Throne some expression of sympathy for those classes who had suffered so seriously by their recent legislation.

MR. BANKES said, he wished to take that opportunity to put one or two questions to the Government. He did not see the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade in his place, but perhaps the noble Lord at the head of the Government might know something of the matter on which he wished to obtain information. He (Mr. Bankes) had seen in a newspaper that day—the *Morning Herald*—a statement to the effect that the Government of Brazil had raised their customs duties on imports from this country to an almost unlimited amount. Now, he wished to know whether that was the fact, and if so, what were the articles thus virtually prohibited. He wished, also, to know whether any accounts had been received since the end of last Session from Portugal and Spain relative to the tariffs in force in these countries. Information upon that point had been promised last Session; but he believed it had never been given. Now, with respect to Portugal, this deficiency of information was very strange. With that Power, at least, our friendly relations had never been disturbed, and we had a competent person at the Court of Lisbon to represent this country, and to obtain any information desired by Parliament. As regarded Spain, although our intercourse with her had certainly been interrupted, there was, he believed, still at Madrid a consul, who had been described by the noble Lord the Foreign Secretary as being quite capable of discharging all duties, and watching over all interests there connected with the trade and commerce of this realm. And now, speaking of Spain, he would answer an inquiry made by the noble Lord (Viscount Palmerston) the other night. The noble Viscount had asked him whether, in revenge for the affront which we had received, he (Mr. Bankes) would recommend our going to war with Spain? The noble Viscount had also assured him that he (Mr. Bankes) must not assume to himself the credit of having expelled the Minister of Spain from London. Now he begged to assure the noble Viscount he had neither assumed, nor did he wish to assume any credit in that respect; for, in his opinion, a more bungling mode of proceeding than that adopted by Government on the occasion in question had never been pursued. For what were the facts? After our Minister had been insulted in Madrid—after he had come home—a living symbol of the greatest insult which one nation could inflict upon another—the Minister of Spain had been allowed to remain here for many days. Now, had he (Mr. Bankes) had any control in the matter, that Minister should not have staid here, as Minister, for so many hours as he had remained days. It would have beeen quite competent for the Government, with all due respect for the person of Senor Isturitz, who was, no doubt, a gentleman of the highest character, fit to represent so gallant a nation, to have intimated to him that he ceased to be an Ambassador at this Court from the moment that the intelligence of the expulsion of our Ambassador from Madrid had become known to the British Cabinet—particularly, considering that the latter gentleman had been so expelled only for fulfilling the orders of those who had employed him on his mission. As to the Spanish Minister here, indeed, he doubted whether he would have been dismissed at all, had it not been for the House of Commons. In reply to the question of the noble Lord, however, he had to say that he would not have gone to war with Spain about the matter in question, had he had the power; but this he (Mr. Bankes) would have done—he would have discovered the real originator of the insult offered to us, and he would have perhaps found him, not in Spain or in Madrid, but in London sitting on the Treasury bench. The noble Viscount was pleased to say that he (Mr. Bankes) and his friends had become the war party in that House. Perhaps they might be amenable to such a charge; but he thought it came with a very ill grace from the noble Viscount and his Colleagues. The party with whom he (Mr. Bankes) acted were chargeable with having last year voted for estimates which they believed were necessary for the public service; and they certainly had assisted the noble Viscount in carrying those estimates through the House, at a time when, had a different course been pursued, the plans of the Government would have been defeated, and their seats in the Cabinet perhaps tranferred to others. The noble Lord (Viscount Palmerston) had said that the House had not been asked to congratulate the Throne with regard to the commerce, manufactures, and improving revenue of the country. But that noble Lord had asked the

House to express its satisfaction; and it was only in accordance with that spirit of complaisance which was usually exhibited on such occasions that the House could concur in an expression even to that limited extent. He could feel no satisfaction with respect to the commerce of the country, when he found that every alteration in the tariffs of other nations was of a hostile nature. How could the House be expected to congratulate the Throne on the state of our manufactures, when not a single manufacturer in that House had stood up to show ground for such congratulation? Were the hon. Members for the West Riding of Yorkshire and for Manchester prepared to say that manufactures were in a state which could be pronounced prosperous? What was found with respect to our revenue according to the balance-sheet which had been laid upon the table of the House that day? Why, an excess of expenditure over income of 796,419*l*. Again, he found an item of 539,305*l*. for China money, a casualty which could not be counted on for this year. There was also another item of 380,415*l*. for old stores. That was an item which ought not to have appeared in the account at all, and which could not be reckoned upon in the year to come. He would ask the House how satisfaction could be fairly expressed at "a progressive improvement in the revenue," when there was such an excess of expenditure over income? But that was not all. There was also the revenue proceeding from the corn duties—an amount not falling far short of a million—which would be struck out from our receipts. The noble Lord at the head of the Government had bound himself, in the speech he had delivered, not to resort to that source of revenue again. That was not a source of satisfaction to those with whom he (Mr. Bankes) acted. There was a source of satisfaction, however, arising from the speech of the noble Lord, to those who had sometimes been taunted with not having accepted the fixed duty of 8*s*., as formerly proposed by the noble Lord; for the noble Lord seemed to intimate in the speech now delivered by him, that the fixed duty could have been no fixed duty at all, but would have come by this time to a vanishing point. Did he misconceive the noble Lord? [Lord JOHN RUSSELL: We should have had it still.] Then he (Mr. Bankes) had some hopes of the noble Lord, and should not quite give himself up to despair. When the noble Lord had no more China money or old stores to look to, he might possibly return to the first object of his love—the fixed duty. He (Mr. Bankes) agreed with his noble Friend (the Marquess of Granby) that we were only entering upon our calamities; and yet it was at such a time that the House was called upon to make new grants to Ireland, and deliberate upon the means of meeting the distress which prevailed in that country. For the reason he had stated, he thought that the party with whom he acted were justified in withholding the language of congratulation towards that part of the Address which spoke in terms of satisfaction of the state of trade, manufactures, and, above all, of revenue.

MR. MILNER GIBSON said, he believed it to be true, as the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Bankes) had stated, that this country was threatened with differential duties by Brazil, and that Brazilian trade was not in so satisfactory a position, or the personal rights of English merchants in Brazil so well respected as they ought to be. But he (Mr. M. Gibson) thought this was to be attributed to that hostile policy which this country had pursued towards the Brazils with respect to the slave trade. At the present time we were acting hostilely towards the Brazils under the authority of an Act which had no foundation in treaty, but was the mere assumption of might over right. We were acting towards the Brazils in a manner calculated to excite hostile feelings in that country; and to our conduct might be attributed the unsatisfactory position in which our merchants engaged in the Brazilian trade were placed. He would ask any Gentleman in the House whether it could be matter of surprise that trade had still difficulties to contend with, considering the restrictive policy which had for years been pursued by this country—whether it could be wondered at that there should still remain some of the difficulties which had been created by a system of restriction? The country had not yet entirely got over the effects of its past restrictive policy. With all respect for country Gentlemen and the agricultural party in that House, he must tell them that he thought they had occupied rather a peculiar position during the debate on this Address. Disclaiming any thing like levity of tone in the expression of his opinion, he must say he thought that, with respect to the tenant occupiers, those honourable Gentleman had taken a very extraordinary course. First of all, they did not openly ask for protection. Hopes had been held out elsewhere; but it was to be remarked that the honourable Member for Bucks (Mr. Disraeli) had not mentioned "protection," but talked of "reciprocity." The question of a return to protection was evaded. But while those Gentlemen evaded protection, they proceeded to censure the Government for proposing a reduction in our armaments, and for attempting to economise our public expenditure. Let them answer the question of the hon. Member for Montrose, and say what it was they proposed ; what it was they wanted for the farmer. They came forward as the friends of the tenant-occupier, but quarrelled with the Executive when they hinted at retrenchment. With respect to the malt tax, he heard parties asking for its repeal. A gentleman who had that morning come from Kent, had told him that his object was to make an appeal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to repeal the hop duties. But how could they ask this burden to be removed, and at the same time object to retrenchment ? He warned those hon. Gentlemen who pursued such a policy, that the country would make them responsible for their advice. Many lectures had been read in that House and elsewhere, upon the impropriety of agitation. He should, himself, be sorry to see agitation carried on beyond the point necessary for giving due instruction, and awakening the public mind with respect to the subject on which they were interested. He approved of instruction to the public, because he did not think that there could be any safe legislation which was not founded on public opinion. In the Speech from the Throne reference was made to attachment to our institutions, and to a constitution founded upon principles of freedom and justice. Lofty though the terms were in which that allusion was made, he admitted that we enjoyed great blessings under that constitution. But he could have wished the tone of the Speech to have been a little more qualified. He did not like the "matchless constitution" doctrine, for that constitution had faults as well as virtues. For instance, it could not be said that the Roman Catholic population were attached to the Protestant Church, and he did not think the Dissenters in this country were enamoured of our ecclesiastical system. In considering the merits of our constitution, therefore, we should keep these qualifying clauses in view. He would ask the hon. Member for Essex how much of the good things we enjoyed under this constitution was the spontaneous gift of Governments, and how much had been wrested from those Governments by the people ? In his opinion, the hon. Member for the West Riding (Mr. Cobden), in awakening the public mind to the enormous amount of expenditure which was going on, was only assisting the Executive, and presenting a support upon which they could lean. The Government were pressed by their friends; the different services were urging on the Executive to a lavish expenditure ; and the public mind had to be awakened and drawn to the subject, in order to prevent a reckless extravagance in the administration of the public funds. He would not detain the House further than to express a hope with respect to the commercial policy of the country. He trusted that all differential duties would be removed, and that the principle of competition would be carried out. He trusted, with the hon. Member for Somersetshire (Mr. Miles), that free trade would be carried out with respect to every interest in the State. He hoped that the Government would pursue that policy, and that the navigation laws would be dealt with as boldly and completely as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Tamworth had dealt with the corn laws. If they did so, he felt assured that their conduct would be appreciated by the country.

SIR J. TYRELL said, having lately attended an enormous meeting of the tenant-farmers and agriculturists of this country, he wished to make an observation or two on that occasion. He had nothing whatsoever to do with the getting up of that meeting, but he acknowledged that two things at it astonished him much. The first was the great numbers which attended it; and the second was the language held at it, and the confirmed manner in which the speakers expressed their respective views upon the state of this country. They had spoken at that meeting against the carrying out of those principles of free trade which the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Milner Gibson) advocated, but which a Chancellor of the Exchequer might find so very inconvenient. He was aware that it was disrespectful to vote against an Address to the Crown ; but he had been brought up in the school of the two noble Lords opposite. He well remembered how those noble Lords were in the habit of tearing to pieces Royal Speeches in days gone by. The omission of all mention of the colonial and agricultural interests of this empire from the Royal Speech, he considered as in some sort an attempt to trade upon the forbearance of the two sections of party into which his side of the House was unfortunately divided. It was very true they had not the hon. Member for the West Riding (Mr. Cobden) sitting on the Treasury benches, although he had been offered office, as they knew; but he thought it was a little unfair that those who came from the Manchester school should claim to themselves the merit of representing the public opinion of this country. And it was strange that the Government should also fancy that that party which arrogated to itself the task of instructing the country should represent the voice of the country. The Gentlemen representing the manufacturing interests had called upon the protectionists to state what it was they wanted. He would ask the men of the Manchester school to tell the Parliament what country it was they wished to imitate, or what they were driving at. It appeared that in the late meetings to celebrate the triumph of former political questions, a strong under-current prevailed, which was to set in in favour of financial reform. If the hon. Member for the West Riding had not held out a budget which it was not very creditable to the Government to have accepted to so great an extent, the Chancellor of the Exchequer in all probability would not have taken the wind (to use a common phrase) out of the sails of the Manchester school. The Chancellor of the Exchequer knew very well he could depend on that (the Opposition) side of the House to keep up the estimates. In 1835 the Secretary at War and Sir Robert Peel had been most closely examined before a Committee as to the expediency of increasing the Army and Navy Estimates, and their opinion had been that the great colonial empire of this State demanded such an increase. What confidence could they in future have in Chancellors of the Exchequer if they came forward to trade upon the divisions existing in that House, in order to carry their respective measures? But they, at his side of the House, could not be justly accused as the promoters of war; although they should assert that the financial and official statement made by the Government showed that this country was in a condition of great alarm and uneasiness. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the West Riding of Yorkshire (Mr. Cobden), seemed to think it necessary to vamp up his character as a prophet; but he (Sir J. Tyrell) was surprised to find Her Majesty's Government adopting hastily and with little decency, the crude doctrines of the hon. Member. It was only fair under such circumstances that the hon. Gentleman should at once receive a seat on the Treasury benches; and he thought the hon. Gentleman ought in justice to himself to insist on his claims to that position. He wished to remind the Members of the Manchester school, that they themselves enjoyed a protective duty of 10 per cent in favour of many of their manufactured articles. [An Hon. MEMBER: Not in favour of cotton manufactures.] The hon. Member who interrupted him, seemed to think there was nothing in the world but cotton. He wished to give fair notice to Her Majesty's Government, that he would not for the future support their estimates; and he would tell the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he should henceforth look after him more carefully than he had been wont to do.

MR. WODEHOUSE wished to express his entire concurrence in all that had fallen from the noble Lord the Member for Stamford (the Marquess of Granby). He could not but agree with him that the Speech from the Throne, and the Address of the House in reply to that Speech, had been framed in a too congratulatory tone, and were not justified by the circumstances in which the country was placed. He felt it his duty distinctly to declare that there was at present a prospect of continued suffering among all classes connected with the occupation of land. In all parts of the kingdom the agricultural interest were exposed to losses and to perils of the most serious character, and which might have been entirely averted, or, at least, greatly mitigated, if more wisdom had been shown in our recent commercial policy. He found that in the year 1841, the noble Lord at the head of the Government, in submitting to the House his proposal for a fixed duty on corn, had used the following language:—

> "He thought likewise he could have shown that a fixed duty had been supported by some of the ablest writers, who considered the subject not with a view to popular applause, but calmly in their closets, and with a view to the improvement of the people."

Now he felt surprised that a statesman, who entertained that view of the subject, could have lent his name, and his influence to so crude a measure as that which had been proposed in the year 1846, under the auspices of the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth, and carried in both Houses, in a manner discreditable to Parliament, and most disastrous in its consequences. It was not the owners of land only that suffered from the change; the farmers suffered still more; but the class which suffered most of all was the agricultural labourers—a class whose condition had been taken into consideration by a Committee which had sat in the year 1824, over which the noble Lord had presided. He had no hesitation in saying, that nothing could exceed the folly and imprudence of the measure passed in the year 1846; and he believed that the experience of the operation of that measure would soon force on every unprejudiced mind the same conviction.

Mr. FREWEN said, he believed the noble Lord the Member for South Durham (Lord H. Vane), who had moved the Address, was a Sussex proprietor, and, what was more, the noble Lord was, as he understood, much against his will, a Sussex farmer. Some years ago, the noble Lord had purchased an estate in that county, and a considerable portion of it had since been thrown on his hands, and remained still unlet. But, as one well acquainted with the state of property in Sussex, he could assure the noble Lord if his farms had become vacant in the year 1845, he would within a single week have found good and substantial tenants for them. He could quote many similar instances in that part of the country, where there were at present many farms unoccupied which could not be let even at greatly reduced rents; and he believed the hon. Member for West Kent, whom he did not then see in his place, could state many similar cases in the district which he represented. The fact was, that farmers were at present losing their capital in attempting to keep their land in a state of cultivation. He hoped that the noble Lord the Member for South Durham (Lord H. Vane) would join the Members of the protectionist party in impressing on Her Majesty's Government the state of the far mers in the weald of Sussex, and throughout the country generally. He could assure the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that it would be perfectly impossible for the Government to collect the hop duty during the ensuing spring. He had been that morning in conversation with a very extensive farmer in that part of the country, who said he was satisfied that if the collection of the hop duty were to be enforced during the spring, half the farmers would have to be sold out, and even then the whole of the duty could not be collected. He really hoped that Her Majesty's Government would be induced to pursue the same course which had been pursued in the year 1822 by the Government of that day, when one-half of the hop duty had been remitted. Without some such concession, the farmers in the hop-growing districts would be absolutely ruined.

Mr. JOHN O'CONNELL desired to offer a few words in explanation of what had fallen from the noble Viscount the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with respect to some observations of his (Mr. J. O'Connell). He (Mr. J. O'Connell) had referred to a report that Lord Minto, during his mission to Italy, had invited Count Sterbini to a dinner, and that, at that dinner, encouragement was given to the outrage which afterward occurred in Rome. He (Mr. J. O'Connell) had made that statement according to the report which had reached him; but, of course, was unable to vouch for its accuracy. He believed, however, that Lord Minto was receiving Count Sterbini, and a son of Ciceruachio at the very time the rioters made their appearance in the streets.

Mr. P. BENNET said, he certainly felt surprised that no allusion had been made to the state of the agricultural interest in the Speech from the Throne; and he also felt bound to complain of the little attention paid in the House to that interest. At a recent meeting held on the borders of Cambridgeshire many statements had been made of labourers thrown out of employment in consequence of the low and unremunerating prices of corn. The hon. Member for Bury St. Edmunds (Mr. Bunbury) could bear testimony to the present depressed state of the agricultural interest. He could tell them that good wheat was sold in that town a fortnight since for 38*s.* a quarter, and that the best wheat in the market had not brought more than 40*s.* a quarter. He had himself seen those prices paid. In a great many districts the smaller farmers were not able to employ labourers on their land, and the union workhouses were rapidly filling. It appeared that the word "protection" was not palatable in that House; but the farmers hoped that for purposes of revenue, if not of protection, something like a fixed duty would be imposed on foreign corn — a project which the party opposite, and especially the noble Lord at the head of the Government, had so constantly and so warmly supported, and which, he (Mr. Bennet) believed, he even now in his heart espoused, would be restored, with the view of affording due encouragement and support to the industry and labour of our own countrymen, and of re-establishing that confidence in the agricultural resources of the country which their recent commercial policy had done so much to destroy.

Mr. HENRY said, that some doubt had been expressed as to the present condition of the manufacturing interest; and, he confessed, he was much surprised at the want of information which had been exhibited by some hon. Members opposite. This was a subject on which he was able to speak with confidence; for he was connected with manufacturing establishments in Lancashire, Yorkshire, Leicestershire, Glasgow, and Belfast, and was also a very extensive exporter of manufactured articles to all parts of the world. He could assure hon. Gentlemen — and he was certain the House would hear it with great satisfaction —that the manufacturing interest was now in a state of considerable prosperity. The evidences of this on all sides were so unmistakeable, that any person who would take the trouble to inquire might satisfy himself that a great degree of prosperity was dawning over the manufacturing interest, and that it had already commenced.

Mr. HUME said, he wished to take that opportunity of stating what, in his opinion, the Government ought to have done, in conformity with the wants and wishes of the country. But before he passed to that subject, he would tell the hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Frewen) and his party what they ought to do for the relief of the agricultural interest. The hon. Baronet the Member for North Essex (Sir J. Tyrell) had candidly acknowledged that he and his friends had voted for the maintenance of our enormous establishments, and that without them the Government could not have carried their budgets. Then he (Mr. Hume) and his friends were justified, upon the hon. Baronet's own authority, in attributing no small share of the culpability of the long-continued extravagance and intolerable burdens under which the people groaned to the country Gentlemen. Now, if those hon. Gentlemen seriously wished to benefit the farmers, he would recommend them henceforward to vote for a diminution of that taxation which pressed so heavily upon all classes. The corn of this country was now exposed to competition with foreign corn, and he hoped that every thing else in this country would be left to contend with foreign competition. He (Mr. Hume) certainly considered the request of the hon. Baronet the Member for North Essex (Sir J. Tyrell) perfectly fair and legitimate—that the same principle of competition which had been carried out with respect to agricultural produce, should also be extended to every branch of manufacture. The hon. Member for Dorsetshire (Mr. Bankes) asked the Government to do something for the agricultural interest. Let him state what they were to do, or what they could do. What could they do for the tenant farmers, except to lessen the burden of general and local taxation, by reducing the expenditure of the country to the lowest rate at which the Government could be carried on? Owing to the artificial state in which agriculture had been long kept, most unfortunately for the country, farmers were now exposed to a severe competition from all parts of the world; and they would be entitled to protection if it was afforded to any one branch of manufactures. Still he was convinced that a free trade in corn was the best for all classes. He rejoiced to hear from his hon. Friend (Mr. Henry) of the improvement in the manufacturing and commercial world, and perfectly concurred in the paragraph of the Address which expressed the gratification of the House on that subject; but he could not admit that that expressed all that the Government ought to do. The Royal Speech ought to be a plain statement of what Ministers meant to do during the Session. Such was the case now in Belgium, in France, and to an extraordinary degree in the United States. Let Government state what the country wanted, and what they meant to do, and not gloss over important questions. Home matters were too much passed over; the first five paragraphs were devoted to foreign policy, and the debate on the Address had almost wholly turned on that point. The noble Viscount at the head of the Foreign Department had, he must do him the justice to say, made a very clever speech for the purpose; but if it meant anything, it was that the English people were called upon to act as the police officers of the whole world, and that whenever kings quarrelled with their subjects, and subjects with their kings, it was our business and duty to interfere to keep the contending parties quiet. This was why they had to maintain costly establishments—to keep peace between the King of Naples and other persons. Why, they would next have to keep peace between the Grand Sultan and his subjects, and every body else. This was the policy to which he (Mr. Hume) had always objected, because it divulged the secret of why the estimates had risen to such an enormous extent, and why the people of England were ground down by a crushing weight of taxation. With these views he meant to place on record what he thought ought to have formed part of the Speech. Last Session there were between two and two and a half millions of petitioners for Parliamentary reform, and a large number for reduction of the excessive burden of our unequal taxation. The following was the number of petitions presented to the House of Commons in 1848 on these subjects, and the number of signatures attached to them:—

Petitions.		Signatures.
9,005	For an extension of the elective franchise	290,559
5	For reform of Parliament	222
3	For the Charter	2,018,080
5	For vote by ballot	4,736
6	For retrenchment of expenditure	42,710
5	For revision of taxation	40,837
167	For retrenchment of naval and military expenditure	162,864
38	For ditto and militia	15,854
1	For reduction of Army	34
9,235		2,535,896

Was it not, then, most extraordinary that no notice had been taken in the Speech of the popular demand for these objects? As to Ireland, in its present state, he did not object to the continuance of the extraordinary powers that had been granted to the Government; still the Irish Members ought to be listened to; and these powers ought not to exist a moment longer than necessary. What, on the other hand, had rendered England unquiet but the demand for reform and reduction in taxation? The Speech spoke of a reduction of some of the estimates; but not a word did it say of the reduction of the general taxation. A revision of our whole fiscal system was loudly called for, and something of the kind had been promised when the income tax was reimposed; but not a word was heard of it now. The colonies, too, did not receive even a single passing allusion. Lord Elgin, in Canada—where responsible government, self-government, for the first time had been given—had, within the last twelve months been conducting the affairs of that dependency with great satisfaction to the colonists. He (Mr. Hume) had just read a speech of his Lordship's, that had only arrived that day; and what did it recommend? He wished Her Majesty's Government would attend to it, and follow his Lordship's example at home. The speech was delivered in the local legislature of Canada on January 18th, when his Lordship declared that he was disposed to think an increase in the representation would be attended with considerable advantage to the public interests; and he commended this subject, which was one of no ordinary importance, to their best and most earnest attention. And why did his Lordship say so? Because petitions had been sent from all parts of the country, in the previous Session, calling for such an improvement. Surely, if the representative of Her Majesty in Canada thought fit to say the time was come for the legislature to occupy itself in endeavouring to meet the wants and wishes of the people for reform, the Government at home should begin to consult the necessities and requirements of the people of England. The time was now come when the Government must be carried on with the consent of the people, or it would be impossible it could be carried on at all. He was of opinion that much more had been made of the events of the 10th of April than circumstances warranted; he believed they had been made a pretext for increasing the Army. He deeply regretted that the present Government many of whose Members had been even stronger reformers than he was, had not sought to meet the wishes of the people. Sound policy demanded that the suffrage should be extended in time, or the consequences, as might be seen elsewhere, would be most deplorable. To know when to yield was the highest wisdom; and this principle had been recognised by the noble Lord at the head of the Government. The omission from the Speech of all allusion to the state of our colonies was most significant. Allusion had been made to the rebellion in the East Indies, but none to the rebellions at the Cape and in Ceylon, whereby a far greater number of lives had been sacrificed. To the eleventh paragraph of the Address, which deplored the existing disaffection in Ireland, and alluded to the continuance of the extraordinary powers, he should propose the following addition:—

> "And we assure Your Majesty, that we shall also without delay, direct our serious attention to the consideration of the rebellions which have unhappily occurred in the course of last year in the Island of Ceylon and at the Cape of Good Hope, in order to ascertain the extent, as well as the causes, of those rebellions; and we shall endeavour to trace the causes of the distress and discontent that exist in British Guiana, in the Mauritius, and in other British Colonies."

And at the end of the twelfth paragraph, the following addition:—

> "But we are, at the same time, compelled earnestly to represent to Your Majesty that the amount of Taxation is excessive, and the burdens more than the industry of the Country can support; that millions of the people are thereby affected both in their physical and moral condition, causing great privations and consequent discontent amongst Your Majesty's faithful people:
>
> "We desire to inform Your Majesty, that numerous Petitions presented to this House, and recorded in its proceedings of last Session, complain of the present system of National Taxation being unequal and unfair in its bearing on the several classes of the community; that the system, therefore, requires a complete revision, with a view to a more fair and equal distribution for the future:
>
> "Our duty to the people further requires, that we humbly represent to Your Majesty, that great and well-founded anxiety exists in this Country respecting the Elective Franchise and the Constitution of this House; that millions of Your Majesty's loyal and industrious people preferred their Petitions for a great extension of the Franchise, and for protection to the Electors, with other measures of reform, by which this House might be so constituted as to fully and fairly represent the people."

In the present state of the House he did not wish to take a division, no notice having been given by him; but when the House came to the paragraphs he had pointed out, he should move these Amendments.

The Address was then read by the clerk at the table. On his arriving at the eleventh paragraph,

Mr. HUME moved the above Amendments.

Mr. BANKES seconded the Amendment of the hon. Member for Montrose with respect to the colonies, because it was essential that they should mention in the Address what was both publicly and privately known with reference to the calamities that had occurred in the colonies specified, and which, if they were to believe the papers, had certainly occasioned a very great loss of life—a loss far exceeding any that had occurred in Ireland. He certainly concurred with the hon. Member for Montrose, that matters such as these ought o have been noticed in the Speech from the Throne, unless those Speeches were a mere form. Although the hon. Gentleman did not intend to divide the House, he (Mr. Bankes) would certainly have been quite prepared to vote with him if he had. There was a great difficulty about giving notice of any intention to move amendments of this kind, because parties could not get at the secret of what the Speech would contain beforehand, but must wait until it was brought under discussion. He (Mr. Bankes) mentioned this to excuse the absence of his friends on the division the other night; and he was sure that if they had had the option of giving notice afforded them, they would have had a much greater number of votes on their side at the division.

Mr. S. CRAWFORD thought the Amendment too important to be allowed to fall to the ground without ascertaining what number of Members would vote in support of it. He therefore appealed to the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hume) not to permit it to be swamped in that way, but to take the sense of the House upon it.

Mr. HUME said, he had already pledged himself not to go to a division under the circumstances he had stated; but it was competent to any other hon. Member to act as he chose in the matter.

The other paragraphs were agreed to.

Address agreed to.—To be presented by Privy Councillors.

POOR LAW (IRELAND).

Sir W. SOMERVILLE said, he rose pursuant to the notice placed on the Paper, for the purpose of proposing the appointment of a Select Committee, with a view to inquire into the operation of the Irish Poor Law. It would be in the recollection of the House that his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Portarlington (Colonel Dunne), proposed a similar Motion in the course of the last Session. That Motion did not meet with the sanction of the House; and the Government were blamed for the course they took with respect to it. He did not think that blame was deserved. He thought then, as he thought still, that any inquiry into a law, which it was no exaggeration to say had not then been fairly tried, must have been founded on insufficient information, and could not have led to any satisfactory result. Any legislation founded on such information, while the operation of the law was still comparatively untried, must have been unsatisfactory, and would have probably only led to the appointment of a fresh Committee to serve as the basis of fresh legislation. But the case was far different now. A year had elapsed since that period; and though in the working of a law of such vast importance, a year was not a long period, nevertheless it was hardly too much to say, that the experience of many ordinary years was crowded into the eventful one which had just passed. He could therefore now redeem the pledges given by the Government on that occasion, that if the law was not found to work satisfactorily, he would propose a Committee of Inquiry. He had heard with surprise the disapprobation expressed from different quarters at the course pursued by the Government. It was said, that instead of proposing a Committee of Inquiry, the Government ought at once to propound their measures. He did not think so. If the Government pursued that course, they would have been justly chargeable with a breach of faith. And he would have expected to have heard, and he had no doubt he would have heard, eloquent and vehement declamations against the Government, for having forfeited the pledge they gave, on more than one occasion, during the last Session. But, independently of this consideration, it was desirable that hon. Gentlemen connected with Ireland, and particularly with such parts of it as were much deranged and embarrassed, should have an opportunity of stating their views with respect to the operation of a law of so much importance to every individual in Ireland; and not only to Ireland, but to every portion of the united kingdom. He would not now stop to inquire whether those derangements and embarrassments were to be attributed to the operation of the poor-law or not. It was certain, at all events, that the operation of that law must have an important bearing upon those districts, and therefore it was not unfair or unreasonable that an opportunity should be given to hon. Gentlemen connected with them to state their views on the subject, and to produce any evidence which might tend to throw light on the particular opinions they might entertain. Even if it should appear, on inquiry, that these views were not well founded, their rejection would be more readily acquiesced in after inquiry than if the Government were now to propose a measure without previous investigation. It might be true that Government had superior means of information on this subject; but that was no reason why persons connected with Ireland should not have an opportunity of fairly stating their views, and why those views should not undergo a most patient and careful investigation. On the present occasion, he would abstain from discussing the disputed points connected with the poor-law, being of opinion that it would be better to leave them for the consideration of the Committee. He was attached to the main principle of the law; but still he thought many improvements could be introduced into it. He would not now state what those improvements were, as he would have an opportunity of doing so before the Committee. It was said, that the course proposed by the Government would solely have the effect of delaying legislation on the subject. As far as Government was concerned, he thought he had given proof that there was no intention of that sort on their part, for this was but the third day of the Session, and he came forward to propose a measure with a view to speedy legislation. He would undertake to say, on the part of the Government, that no efforts would be wanting on their part to bring the proceedings before the Committee to a speedy termination. And if any further legislation (said the right hon. Baronet, in conclusion) shall be thought necessary to place the law on a more satisfactory footing, every effort shall be used on the part of the Government to bring forward those measures. I have no doubt the same anxiety for the improvement of the law will animate every hon. Member who shall be placed on that Committee: and I cannot despair that we shall come to a satisfactory conclusion, and effect such improvements in the law as will prove generally useful. The right hon. Gentleman then proposed the appointment of a Select Committee on the Irish Poor Laws.

Mr. F. FRENCH said, that as an Irish Member, and as an individual who had from the first represented the ruinous consequences which must follow from the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government, he hoped the House would allow him to make one or two observations. His right hon. Friend had taunted the Irish Members on account of their hesitation to acquiesce in the appointment of that Committee for which they had struggled with so much unanimity last Session; but the House must recollect that last year their object was to direct the attention of the Legislature and of the country to the ruinous and destructive effects of the legislation which had been pursued; and that the case was now quite different. Now, that it was well known that the property of three-fourths of the landlords was confiscated, that a great portion of the capital of the farmers had melted away, that the strength of the peasantry was destroyed, and their domestic affections nearly obliterated, what had they to prove—what object had they to gain by the appointment of the Committee? On the other hand, those who had experience in that House knew very well that a Motion referred to a Select Committee was a Motion put aside for the Session. It was true his right hon. Friend (Sir W. Somerville) had stated that, on the part of Her Majesty's Government, there was every desire that the inquiry should be brought to a speedy issue; but had not his right hon. Friend also told the House that every latitude was to be given to every Member of the Committee; that every man was to be allowed to proceed with his own nostrum; and they had heard that at a recent meeting of nine Irish Members in Dublin, there were five different opinions on this subject. Then it was said, that when the Committee was appointed, the House ought to confide in it, and be governed by the wishes of the Irish people; but every one who knew the history of this very law, must be well aware that the opinion of the Irish people would be of little weight if it differed from that of the Government or the Poor Law Commissioners. He begged the House to recollect that in 1838 this law was forced upon Ireland in opposition to the expressed opinions and wishes of the Irish representatives, and in opposition to the report of the most able men in Ireland appointed by the Government, including the Archbishop of Dublin, Mr. More O'Ferrall, and others; it was forced upon Ireland upon the authority of the report of Mr. Nicholls, which would have possessed no great authority if it had not been stamped by the sanction of Her Majesty's Government. That report contained an assurance that the expense would not exceed 300,000*l.* a year, but last year it amounted to 2,000,000*l.* Had the Government then exhibited any displeasure towards the individual, who, through ignorance or design, had so misled them? Far from it; the same individual had received one of the most lucrative places which became vacant upon a change in the Poor Law Department in this country; and there was, therefore, no reason for supposing that Her Majesty's Gevernment at all regretted the course which it had pursued. He would pass now to the Extension Act of 1847, which could hardly be said to have come into operation before the 1st of October in that year, as, until that time, the Relief Act was in operation. By that Act, for the purpose of calming the excited, alarmed, and, he might say, irritated feelings of the people (for to no other motive could he attribute it), outdoor relief was again forced upon Ireland, in defiance of the authority of the recorded evidence of every individual of eminence in that country—in opposition to the statements of every eminent political man in that House, in any way connected with Ireland, and notwithstanding a report of the Committee of the other House, stating that outdoor relief was dangerous alike to the interests of the community at large, and to those of the class for whose benefit it was intended. In defiance of all authority that fatal step was taken; and the ruin of half the country had followed. This law was universally detested; he would venture to say, that there never was a law in any country so universally detested, both by the ratepayers and the recipients of relief. This state of things was not confined to the provinces of Connaught or Munster, but extended to Ulster and those provinces which more nearly resembled this country; for he had been recently told that, unless some remedy was found, before twenty months was passed, all the men of capital in the north of Ireland would have left the country. In the province of Connaught the rated property was 1,321,065*l.*; the inhabitants, 1,448,000; and last year the relief given amounted to 372,649*l.*; of which the amount of rate collected was only 187,271*l.* In Connaught the average rate was 5*s.* 8*d.* in the pound; in Munster, 3*s.* 7*d.*; and that upon a valuation very nearly double what it ought to be; whilst, in England, 2*s.* 4*d.* in the pound was about the highest amount of rate. In the Castlebar union, 44 per cent of the population were on the rates; in the Ballinrobe union, 58 per cent of the population; and in the Clifton union, 62 per cent. These facts showed the state to which the country was reduced; but, further, the rates were almost invariably collected by military force; cavalry and infantry, and even artillery, were frequently obliged to be brought up; and the farmers said, would it not be better to leave the land untilled than to have it torn from us by the soldiers for the support of these houses, where the idle and worthless are maintained? The result of the present state of the law, therefore, was to diminish cultivation and increase pauperism. Under such circumstances, all of which were known to the Government, he thought that they were fully justified in expecting the Government to state what remedy they proposed. One step, indeed, had been already taken, and a very judicious one, for the purpose of reducing the poor-law districts to manageable limits, which were now so much larger in proportion than the English districts, that there was four times as much to do in the one as in the other. He felt that it was absolutely necessary that Her Majesty's Government should declare whether they intended to propose such changes as had been suggested by the Commissioners. It must be borne in mind that land in Ireland was not purchased or inherited subject to this tax, as it was in England. It was very well to say that they did it for the sake of uniformity with England; but why should they take the property of the landlords alone? Why should the mortgagees and annuitants escape? Why should professional incomes escape? If they took the entire property of the country, the landlords would willingly bear their share of the burden. In England the income-tax fell upon incomes of every description. By taxing the country upon that principle, an adequate fund might be raised, which would not exceed 1*s.* in the pound; outdoor relief should be abolished, and the workhouses should be made self-supporting; the ablebodied poor should be made, by their labour, to maintain the aged and infirm; and the expense might then be reduced to 500,000*l.* a year. Then let a tax be laid upon all property in Ireland—for, from the capabilities of Ireland, he desired to see Ireland developed—a sufficient tax to employ the ablebodied, and to develop the resources of the country; and he was convinced that it would be cheerfully paid. In that way only could the difficulties of this important question be settled. At all events, it was impossible that the present system could be continued; the intelligence and capital of the country were being driven out; property to the amount of 10,000,000*l.* had left Ireland within the last fourteen months; and if the system were continued, the result must be to generate an ulcer in one corner of the country which would, at no great distance of time, spread over every part of it. He would not longer occupy the House on that occasion; but he felt that it was of very great importance that some declaration should be made by Her Majesty's Government calculated to restore confidence to the agricultural body; for he could assure the Government of this, that if the present feeling was allowed to continue, two-thirds of Connaught and a great part of Munster would remain unsown.

Mr. W. FAGAN said, it was very unfortunate that the forms of the House required that his hon. Friend (Mr. J. O'Connell) should introduce his Amendment into the debate on the Motion of the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire, (Mr. Disraeli), in order to its being at all received. Under the circumstances the House was not disposed to attend to an Irish debate, while another and more agreeable, because a party one, was pending. Still the topics having reference to Ireland were too important to be passed over; and therefore he looked for the indulgence of the House while he made a few short remarks on the three points in the Speech from the Throne which had reference to Ireland. The Speech states somewhat too vaguely that great distress exists in some parts of Ireland owing to the failure of the potato crop. If this vague sentence indicates an intention on the part of Her Majesty's Government to ask the assistance of Parliament for relief of the districts alluded to —then, though he felt very unwilling to come, in any mendicant form, to ask aid from the Imperial Exchequer, he would support such a proposition, because of the utterly hopeless and deplorable condition of the south and western districts of Ireland. To sustain the destitute population in these parts, imperial aid is requisite—the entire income of the land is absorbed in some places, and still is inadequate for the purpose. In was the case in Connaught—it was so in some portions of the county of Cork, in Bantry, and Skibbereen, and also in the remote districts of Kerry. The House may easily judge how inadequate to meet the present emergency are many unions in Ireland, when he stated that some electoral divisions are valued so low as 9*d.* per acre—that the ratio of the population is three to every one pound of value, and that according to the census of 1841, there is a population of over 10,000 to the square mile of produce in some of the west coast divisions, in their ordinary normal condition. What then must be the distress in these parts now, when that produce had in a great degree failed, and how impossible is it for the land there to support its enormous population? In truth the whole of Ireland is nearly in the same condition. Nothing can prove this better than the state of the circulation in that country. The banks of Ireland are permitted to issue something over six millions, without the necessity of having by law gold in their tills for any portion of the issue. Yet such is the prostrate state of Ireland that that circulation is reduced one-third, and the circulation in the hands of the public is still further reduced by hoarding; for a state of panic now exists in Ireland somewhat similar to that in October 1847 in this country. The consequence is that trade is at an end, that prices have fallen one-half, that the whole country is broken down and prostrate. The whole condition of the country is then deserving the attention of Parliament, with the view to some permanent and effectual remedy. He next came to the question of the Poor Law: and here he must say that he altogether differed from his hon. Friend the Member for Limerick (Mr. J. O'Connell), when he said no inquiry was necessary before legislation on this all-important question. He felt it was imperatively called for, and he considered it would be most inconsistent on the part of the Irish Members now to say no inquiry was necessary, when last year they were loud in their complaints throughout the length and breadth of the land, because such inquiry was refused them. The great difference of opinion which exists both outside and inside the House proves that such inquiry was called for. There was a meeting of Irish Members in Dublin a few days ago. The number assembled was nine. The question discussed was the poor-law, and there were five distinct and separate opinions expressed at that meeting. Again, in the present debate, mark the various opinions. For example—he was now and at all times in favour of a poor-law for Ireland. His hon. Friend the Member for Limerick (Mr. J O'Connell), was opposed to it, so was the hon. Member for Meath (Mr. Grattan). Therefore, he considered inquiry necessary; but he hoped, and from what had fallen from the noble Mover, he believed, that that inquiry would have for its object the making the law more efficient for the protection of the destitute, and the preventing wealthy proprietors of the soil shirking their responsibilities and placing the burden on other shoulders. He now approached the subject of his hon. Friend's Amendment. Had he ventured to speculate on what would have been the reference made to Ireland, he would have anticipated that Her Majesty would have congratulated Parliament on the perfect tranquillity which existed in Ireland; and as they had always heard that agitation was the bane of Ireland—that nothing could be done for her while it continued—that extensive amelioration would be the consequence of its non-existence, he did hope that enlarged measures for the social benefit of that country would be recommended in the Speech, by reason of the perfect quiet that reigns in Ireland. Yet now for the fifth time, within almost twelve months, they were to have coercion, and the constitution was to be suspended without just cause, for he denied that there was, as the noble Mover of the Address (Lord H. Vane) stated, disaffection in Ireland. Where was the proof of it? He asserted that all political feeling was dead in Ireland—that the people were sick of agitation, and though in some districts in the north disorganisation existed, still he believed there was much exaggeration—much of false statement and of absolute hoaxing in what was going on there; and in the part of the country with which he was acquainted, he asserted that there was no justification for the demand for new powers on the part of the Lord Lieutenant. The noble Mover said, that this was a vote of confidence in Lord Clarendon. Now, he fully admitted—for he would never disguise a conviction he entertained—that Lord Clarendon had exercised the powers entrusted to him with great moderation. But he was not disposed to give him his confidence so long as he defended, by his station and his talents, the jury system in Ireland. [*A laugh.*] Yes, he would call it the Irish jury system—for that meant the jury packing system. Would that House believe it, that on a late occasion out of a list on the jury book of 2,900 Catholics, and 1,600 Protestants, the sheriff selected a panel of 177, of whom there were not more than twenty-five Catholics, after deducting those who were dead, or could not attend, or were otherwise objectionable; and of these twenty-five, nineteen were placed amongst the last sixty names, and therefore, had no chance of being on the jury, who were to try a Roman Catholic for a political offence. This system of exclusion he protested against—this abolition of the Act of Emancipation—this setting class against class; and until it was remedied, Lord Clarendon could not hope for the confidence of the Irish people. A trial was shortly to take place in that country. Let a new system be adopted—let the jury be fairly and indiscriminately selected, and he, for one, was disposed to overlook the past, provided redress was afforded at the eleventh hour for the wrong heretofore inflicted on the Catholics of Ireland, and on the accused, by the jury packing system of Ireland. Coercion and jury packing were not the way to govern Ireland. Do her justice—improve her social condition—give her people an interest in her soil and in her institutions—make the interest of one class the interest of the other; and then, and not till then, will you obtain the confidence of Ireland.

Major BLACKALL expressed his satisfaction at the course pursued by the Government, and he trusted that one result of the inquiries of the Committee would be to show that Irish Members in asking for an investigation had not been actuated, as they had been accused of being, by a wish to get rid of the poor-law altogether. He could answer for the majority, not only of Irish Members but of Irishmen, that they had no desire to shift from their own shoulders the burden of supporting their own poor. Their sole reason for asking for inquiry last year was, to stimulate as much as possible the energies of the people and the labour of the country. The great object to be kept in view was the development of the agricultural resources of the country; whereas hitherto employers had found that by giving labourers employment, they had not relieved themselves at all from the burden of taxation, which had, at length, become intolerable. In amending the poor-law, care should be taken to adapt it to ordinary years, to what he hoped would be the condition of Ireland. A great difference of opinion naturally prevailed amongst Members representing different districts. The amount of destitution varied. In some parts it was frightful, while in others it was comparatively light. He recollected hearing a gentleman observe at a meeting held in Dublin, that the poor-law must be working very well in a certain district of Wicklow, seeing that there were no complaints about it. The explanation of this was, that in Wicklow there prevailed remarkably little destitution. A similar difference of opinion would, under similar circumstances, prevail in England.

Mr. BRIGHT said, although he had no fault to find with the appointment of the Committee, but, on the contrary, was of opinion that, considering the feeling which prevailed in Ireland, it would be wholly unjustifiable to refuse inquiry, yet he was anxious to state his belief that Irish Members deceived themselves when they fancied that the evils from which they suffered resulted from the working of the corn law—[*Laughter*]—he meant the poor-law. Hon. Members opposite had spoken so much of late respecting the corn law, that his mistake might be excused. The great complaint made by Irish Members was that an excessive amount of pauperism existed in certain parts of Ireland. The English poor-law was at present comparatively little complained of; but if pauperism existed in any English county to as great an extent as it did in some parts of Ireland, the English law would be complained of just as loudly as was the Irish. The hon. and gallant Member who spoke last (Major Blackall), had declared that Irish people having property were not indisposed to support the poverty of their country. He was exceedingly glad to hear that statement; but he believed that the labours of the Committee would lead to the conclusion that no shifting of the burden of poor-rates in Ireland from one district to another, and no readjustment of the poor-law staff, however expensive it might be at present, would save Ireland from absolute ruin, from a state of things in which one half of the population would eat up the other, which was, in fact, nearly the existing condition of many parts of the country. The hon. Member for Roscommon (Mr. F. French) said he did not see why mortgagees and annuitants should not bear a portion of the burden. Was not the hon. Member aware that if any one borrowed money of a capitalist in this country, he must, as a matter of course, pay the rate of interest bargained for; and that if he required a mortgagee to pay a portion of his rates, the only result would be, either that he would be obliged at the same time to offer a larger rate of interest, or else that he would be unable to obtain the loan? There was, in fact, no more helpless delusion than that of supposing, as many hon. Members did, that they might by such means as these get rid of the pressure of the poverty by which they were surrounded. He did not know whether or not the Committee would be allowed to go into other questions besides that of the poor-law itself; but the attention which he had paid to the subject—though not an Irish Member, and though he had not lived in Ireland, the question was one which had not been neglected by him—had led him to the conclusion that, unless the resources of Irish land were developed, the people, having no power of supporting themselves by their own industry, Irish landlords would remain for a time in their present position, and would in the end infallibly be eaten up. There was no one here who could relieve them; there was not wealth or industry enough in Great Britain to save them, if they were able to do nothing for themselves. He had no doubt whatever that there were many districts of Ireland—that there were, in fact, many counties—which, at that moment, were in such a position through incumbrances, mortgages, and settlements of various kinds, that it was quite impossible for the land, in the present state of things, to support the population. Last year a Bill had passed through Parliament for which the Government took great credit. When that Bill came down from the other House, where it encountered many difficulties, the Solicitor General made several beneficial alterations in it. At the last stage, however, of the measure there was a clause added to it which referred to the service of certain notices, which clause had the effect of destroying nineteen-twentieths of any good that was likely to be derived from it when it came from the hands of the Solicitor General. He had understood that that clause was inserted for the purpose of ensuring the passing of the Bill in the other House of Parliament. He did not positively affirm that such was the case, but he had heard the statement on pretty good authority. He now asked the Government if they were aware of any case in which the measure, having been put in force, had done one particle of good in the direction in which it was intended to operate? They could not, he thought, point out a single instance. He had heard of one instance, in which there having been an attempt to put the Bill in force, it was found impossible to do so. Another case of attempt he had been informed of, in which considerable mischief had arisen; and he believed that no one had derived the slightest benefit from the measure except the Irish lawyers. Unless the House could grapple with the land question, no Landlord and Tenant Bill, no Poor Law Bill, and no shifting of taxation from one district to another, and no taxing of mortgagees or proprietors of moveable property, could produce any beneficial effect. The people must be set to work by some means or other, or else the pauperism of Ireland would eat up its property.

Mr. STAFFORD said, that it was not often he had the satisfaction of hearing a speech from the hon. Member for Manchester in every word of which he most entirely concurred. It was his most decided opinion, that unless they dealt at once with the land question in Ireland, and made a poor-law which would develop the resources of the country, they would do nothing, and would have to come down year after year for million after million of the public money, which would impoverish even the resources of this great empire, and, instead of affording real and lasting relief to Ireland, it would only tend to perpetuate the very evil in question. The *Economist* of last week contained a little anecdote, to which he would call the attention of the House, as showing the effect of the present condition of things in that country. A Scotch farmer, upon being asked why he would not go into Ireland and embrace some very tempting offer, and invest his capital there, and employ his skill and industry, made this answer, "I want to go where I can farm, and not to pay poor-rates." This answer really involved the whole question to be considered by the House. It was not that Scotch farmers or English capitalists objected to bear their fair share of the burdens of poor-rates; but when they invested their money, they wanted to know, with some sort of approximation to the truth, what the returns to the capital would be. He would give the House an instance of the beneficial operation of capital, when something like a return to it could be calculated. In the very worst union of an electoral division in the worst county of the worst province of Ireland, there was an island called Arran More. Upon this island was such a nest of paupers, that it was impossible to know how to deal with it. A Belfast capitalist came forward and said, "I will buy the island" (the island belonged to a noble Marquess), "but I demand, before I buy it, not that any Government money should be advanced to it; not that it may be relieved from the payment of poor-rates; not that it may be dealt with as a special case; but that it may be made an electoral division of by itself." The board of guardians, anxious to get rid of this worst part of their district, wrote to the Commissioners to ask leave to avail themselves of the powers granted under the Act, and make the island an electoral division. The Commissioners acceded to the request; the island was made an electoral division, purchased by the capitalist, and the work of imporvement was now fast progressing on the island. Now here was a case in which the resources of the land were developed. It was not a case of religious or political triumph, but a mere matter of business, a calculation of "what return shall I get for my money?" The House would perceive then that it would be extremely difficult to deal with such cases as these. Hon. Gentlemen would be very much surprised if they were to awake some morning and discover that a line had been drawn through their estates, and that thus one half the land was thrown into one parish and the other half into another; yet such was the case in Ireland, and that entirely in consequence of the manner in which the Commissioners had drawn lines over extensive districts. He was not giving utterance merely to his own theories on the subject; he told the House what was the case where the resources of the land were allowed to be developed. He knew it might be said that there would be great difficulties in dealing with these cases. It might be said by persons who managed their own property well, "We manage our own property, and attend to our own poor; let the remainder be provided for by other and more general means." Those parties, however, who advocated the small area of taxation were perfectly willing to bear their portion of a burden of a rate in aid, over and above a certain amount which might be expended by themselves. The difficulty in that respect would therefore cease upon the adoption of such a plan. The whole system of electoral divisions required revision. Nothing could be more arbitrary than the manner in which the Commissioners, sitting perhaps in their carriages, on the nearest road, marked the country out into off-hand divisions, wholly regardless of parks, or properties, or parishes, or unions, or baronies, or even of counties. He was aware that a Boundary Commission had been appointed in 1847; it would be premature to state what they intended to do, but it would not be premature to state that the tendency of the report of that Commission would be, unless public rumour very much belied them, to make a very considerable reduction in the area of taxation for poor-law purposes. He should have wished to have known what portion of the poor-law the Government were prepared to maintain. He trusted that the Government would not be open to some severe blame, when this debate was concluded, on the ground that they had refused to specify upon what portion of the Irish poor-law they were determined to take their stand. The right hon. Member for Drogheda (Sir W. Somerville) had said that they were prepared to take their stand upon the main points of the poor-law. That was merely begging the question, for he did not state what those "main points" were. Were the Government prepared to stand to the system of outdoor relief to the ablebodied? Were they disposed to support the taxation upon the tenant? Would they continue their support to the quarter-acre clause? Were they disposed to make any alteration in the present existing boards? Did they propose to make any alteration affecting the interests of immediate lessors? In what manner did they propose to consider the question of tithes in reference to the incidents of the poor-rates? Were these subjects to be meddled with or not? If not, let them state it. If they were to be touched, he maintained that the Government would shrink from its responsibility if it did not openly avow its intentions on the subject, and their conduct would give rise to unfounded hopes and vague misapprehensions in the minds of the people of Ireland, and would tend to confirm the report, very generally and widely spread, that the Government had had recourse to this Committee because they were, upon the subject of the poor-law of Ireland, a divided Government; they gave no reason to the people to believe that the proceedings of this Committee would be brought to a satisfactory determination; and the general opinion would be, that they delayed legislation upon the matter because they found themselves incompetent to perform the task.

Colonel DUNNE observed, that the resolutions to which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Fagan) had referred, were not, in point of fact, resolutions, but simply suggestions, emanating from various parts of

Ireland. There certainly had been much difference of opinion at the meeting in question, even more than had been stated, for there being nine gentlemen present, there had been declared ten differences of opinion, so that one gentleman must have differed in opinion from himself, as well as from the other eight gentlemen. He considered that the Government were adopting a wise course in appointing this Commission. In the course of the last Session, he had the honour to move for a Select Committee on the same subject; but he was then told that his Motion was premature, that the measure had not yet received a fair trial. The measure had now received a fair trial; and he was grateful to the Government for the course they now proposed to take on the subject. He was firmly persuaded that the result of the inquiry of the Committee would be most beneficial. No poor-law could ever be framed with such an amount of talent and judgment as to enable it to supply the wants of some of the districts in the west of Ireland. Where the valuation of the property was insufficient to support the population resident upon it, some other remedy must be sought for. The hon. and gallant Member then referred to the union of Skibbereen, which had a population of 104,508 persons, while the property of the district was valued at 98,255*l.*, being about 17*s.* or 18*s.* a head. The whole property of the country was melting away, and Ireland would become one mass of pauperism unless some remedy were applied. The poor-laws of England and of Ireland were in many respects essentially different, both in their principle and their operation. The hon. Member for Northamptonshire (Mr. Stafford) had already referred to the disruption of districts which had been parcelled out in the most capricious manner; and he had also to complain that the poor-law returns were got up in a very imperfect way. He must impress upon the Government the necessity of making a marked distinction between support inside and outside of the workhouse, without which there never would be any improvement in the administration of the law. One of the great defects in the conduct of the Irish Poor Law had been the mixing up two questions essentially different: the one, the ordinary poor-law, applicable to a sound state of society; the other, that relief of destitution which was necessitated by the exceptional application of a general dearth. These cases should be treated upon wholly different principles. One enormous evil of the present system was, that it inflicted double oppression upon the very men who most earnestly applied themselves to the improvement of their estates. The hon. Gentleman referred in particular to the cases of Sir Charles Coote and Lord Farnham, who having no paupers whatever upon their own properties, but on the contrary giving constant employment to several hundreds of men, were, by the unjust distribution of the taxation area, made to pay enormously beyond anything like their fair proportion. The whole thing, in fact, needed thorough revision. The ordinary practice must be completely remodelled. In the returns, too, there must be a careful adherence to the facts. As to the present returns, they were almost all of them mere deceptions, mixing up figures and statements having no sort of connexion, except in the purpose of the parties advancing them for their own purposes. He said, therefore, that it was necessary to have an inquiry; and if that inquiry should be carried out in the spirit which his right hon. Friend the Secretary for Ireland had announced, he (Colonel Dunne) should give him his most cordial support.

Mr. SADLIER said, he could not forget that the extremely onerous and important duties of Secretary for Ireland, conjointly with those of a Poor Law Commissioner, and a law officer of the Crown, all devolved upon the right hon. Baronet (Sir W. Somerville) opposite, for whom he felt disposed, therefore, to make very great allowances. He hoped, however, that those pertinent questions which had been put by his hon. Friend the Member for Northamptonshire (Mr. Stafford) would be distinctly answered before the close of the debate; and in the meantime he must complain that the Irish Secretary had altogether abstained from laying before the House those matured views upon the question which he should have thought he must have formed as the head of the Irish Poor Law Commission. He should have thought that the right hon. Gentleman would have shown them something of the unanimity that prevailed amongst his Colleagues, and that the opinion of Mr. Twisleton would have been laid before the House. He trusted, moreover, that some Member of the Cabinet would explain to the House the principle upon which the poor-rates were at present collected in Ireland. As he understood the matter, it was done something in this way—The guardians met and discovered that the sum, say of 5,000*l.*, was necessary to carry out the purposes of the Act. They consulted their clerk, and inquired what rate would be necessary in order to realise that sum. He would respond, perhaps, 1*s.* in the pound. That rate would be accordingly struck, and the collectors would go forth to collect it. In seven or eight weeks the collectors would return, but instead of having received 5,000*l.*, they had probably not got in more than 3,000*l.* What was then to be done? Another rate must be struck, perhaps of 4*d.* in the pound. Again the collectors go forth, and after another lengthened absence they return with 1,500*l.*, and this second sum has been collected almost entirely from the very persons who paid the first rate; whilst those who evaded the first rate, evaded the second also. This was a direct encouragement to a certain set of miserable landlords, whom he need not further particularise, to have upon their estates a class of tenants who were able to pay rack rents, but could not pay the poor-rates. Some years ago it was looked upon as one of Ireland's grievances, that there was no provision in that country for the registration of births, deaths, and marriages. When he (Mr. Sadlier) asked the noble Lord at the head of the Government a question upon that subject last Session, he stated he had all the materials necessary for the introduction of the Bill, and felt that it was a very desirable measure, still that he was not prepared to bring it forward at that time. This was a measure which, in his opinion, was intimately connected with the operation of an efficient poor-law in Ireland; and it was impossible to consider the question whether a law of settlement should be retrospective or not, unless they ascertained the intentions of the Government on that subject. With respect to mortgagees, he thought it very desirable that it should not go forth to the public, that there was any intention to make them contribute towards the poor-rate, as nothing could tend more to prevent the introduction of capital into Ireland. He hoped that in the present Session, a Registration Bill would be introduced by some Member of the Cabinet; for it was evident that the English Bill must be perfectly futile, unless the registration also extended to Ireland. Some allusions had been made to the subject of the area of taxation, which would be one of the most important subjects that could engage the attention of the Committee. Let the House compare England with Ireland in this respect. In this country there was a cultivable area of about 25,000,000 acres, whilst in Ireland the cultivable area was something above 13,000,000 acres. In England there were 533 unions and union houses; but in Ireland the law was expected to work successfully with about 132 unions and union houses. Of these 533 in England, only 42 exceeded 100,000 acres in extent, whilst in Ireland there were 107 with an area exceeding 100,000 acres; and of those no less than 25 exceeded 200,000 acres. The average population of the English unions did not exceed 23,400; but the average of the Irish unions was something above 62,000. In Ireland there were ten unions whose population exceeded 100,000; in England there were only six. This showed the great social differences of the country, and he wanted to know from the Government how they proposed to dispose of the surplus agricultural population. The noble Lord at the head of the Government had expressed his deliberate opinion, a very short time ago, that the introduction of outdoor relief into Ireland would not remove any of the difficulties or distress, but was eminently calculated to perpetuate them, and to fix them where they were. He had heard the noble Lord talk of large pasture farms, of a yeoman tenantry, and the value of having in Ireland a peasant proprietary; but he had never seen the noble Lord come forward with any practical, direct, and well-digested system of legislation, by which they could meet the real difficulties of the case. At the same time, it was perfectly plain that it was never intended that the landed property of Ireland should be subjected to the operations of the poor-law without the contemporaneous introduction of auxiliary and adjunctive measures of a remedial nature. He trusted they should be informed, before the debate closed, whether it was the intention of the Cabinet to insist on a system by which they should have the ratepayers represented by elected guardians, and associated with some persons who would represent the poor-law guardians. If the Government were to take into their immediate consideration the system upon which Ireland had been cast into unions, they would find that no alteration or amendment that could take place would have the effect of relieving the destitution, or of giving a stimulus to industry in Ireland. It ought to be remembered that when the poor-law was introduced into this country, the system of parochial divisions was adopted. The most remarkable feature in an existing district in Ireland was this. In Tralee, the population in some electoral divisions did not exceed 1,300, whilst in other electoral divisions in the same union they exceeded 23,000. The area of some of the electoral divisions in the Tralee union did not exceed 3,186 acres, whilst in others it was 23,321 acres. He hoped the Committee would take this subject into their serious consideration; he trusted they would insist on a review of the entire system on which the unions and electoral divisions had been formed; and if the Committee should omit to consider it, he trusted that the Government would see that the unions and electoral divisions in Ireland were so constructed that they should approximate to the size, and character, and circumstances of the English unions. Instead of 132 or 133 unions in Ireland, they should have double that number. In the north of Ireland, the sizes of the unions and electoral divisions were more uniform. He complained very much that the Government had not come forward and stated explicitly what measures they meant to introduce of a remedial character for Ireland. He thought they ought to introduce some measure to provide for the more effectual recovery of the arrears of poor-rate in Ireland.

Sir G. GREY observed, that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sadlier) had adverted to a variety of topics, all of them of great importance; but with respect to the details of the operation of the poor-laws, they were better fitted for a reference to a Committee; and he thought it would be much more convenient for the despatch of the business to abstain from following him in the consideration of those details. There were a few portions, however, to which he would refer. First, as to the collection of rates. The hon. Member had said that an estimate having been made of what was required for a given parish, the collector who had gone to collect the rates had returned to the guardians stating that a considerable portion had remained uncollected, not from positive inability to pay them, but from an evasion of the law, and that the law had not been enforced. [Mr. Sadlier: From both causes; chiefly from their destitution.] They could not frame a law for the collection of rates where there was a positive inability to pay. [Mr. Sadlier: Yes, from the land.] The hon. Member would find no indisposition on the part of the Poor Law Commissioners to enforce the poor-law to the utmost in the collection of rates. With respect to the Boundary Commission, he had to state that the first report of the Commission had, within the last few days, been transmitted to the Government and laid on the table. He believed that many hon. Members who had been in communication with these Commissioners could testify to the diligence and patience with which they had discharged their duties. He would not state from recollection the general tenor of their report, as it would be in the hands of Members in a very short time. He would only say that the report had been referred to the Poor Law Commissioners, that they might report on the expediency and practicability of carrying its recommendations into effect. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sadlier) stated that the unions in Ireland had not been made on a uniform principle. In that he quite agreed; and it was because he agreed in that opinion that the Boundary Commission was appointed. He had decided upon appointing that Commission before the Motion was made by the hon. Member for Portarlington (Colonel Dunne), and he had so stated himself to a deputation of Irish gentlemen. In Ulster, he believed, the Commissioners did not find that any alteration in the unions was generally desired. In other parts of Ireland, these unions were formed on a different scale; and he believed there was a tendency to assimilate them to those of Ulster. As to electoral divisions, he could not encourage the principle of the reduction of the area of taxation to the size of the townlands. The Committee would be in possession of the report of the Boundary Commissioners; and he would now only express a hope that the report and the evidence on which it was founded would tend to abridge the labour of the Committee, and save them much trouble. The hon. Member (Mr. Sadlier) seemed to expect that the Government should be prepared to give explicit answers on all points connected with the proposed amendments of the poor-law; and the hon. Member for Northamptonshire (Mr. Stafford) found fault with the Government for not at once producing a Bill of their own on the subject. He believed that if they had done so, the result would have been, it would have been attacked by all the Irish Gentlemen, even though each of them differed from the other. He was not prepared to answer all the questions which had been asked; but he would say, in reply to the most important question addressed to him by the hon. Member for Northamptonshire that Government were going into the Committee without any intention of altering the principle on which the poor-law was founded, or the principle of relief which was embodied in the Act of 1847. As to their falling back on the original law, or taking away the power of relieving the ablebodied under any circumstances, he felt it right to state that Government entertained no such intention. Their object was, to facilitate the operation of the law, at the same time keeping the main object in view, which was, to preserve from starvation thousands of the people of Ireland; for he believed that, had it not been for the poor-law, thousands would have perished during the past year.

Mr. H. HERBERT said, that it was not his intention to enter into any details as to the working of the poor-law: both the hour of the night and the occasion rendered that course inexpedient; but he might be permitted to say a few words to explain why he had determined, with great reluctance, to vote for the Amendment of the hon. Member for Meath (Mr. Grattan). He had come to that determination in consequence of the declaration of the noble Lord at the head of Her Majesty's Government, that the Ministers were not prepared with any measure to remedy the abuses of the present Irish Poor Law. It was stated in the proposed Amendment, that a feeling of discontent, augmented by the distresses of the people, still exists. He thought that too self-evident a proposition to be denied, and he confessed that he shared in that discontent, and that it was much augmented by the declaration of the noble Lord. The reason that the noble Lord had given for doing nothing, namely, the want of unanimity among the Irish Members, had, he thought, no weight whatever. It had been stated, that at a meeting of Irish Members in Dublin, at which only nine attended, there were five distinct plans proposed for the alteration of the poor-laws. This appeared to him to be only an additional reason why Her Majesty's Government should have come forward with some distinct proposition of their own upon the subject. If the noble Lord said, that he would wait until the Irish Members agreed amongst themselves, that was tantamount to a declaration that there should be no legislation at all, which declaration would, he believed, be received with a feeling of discontent and dismay in Ireland.

Sir LUCIUS O'BRIEN deprecated the delay of the Government in taking the alteration of the poor-law into consideration.

Mr. MONSELL said, that the real difficulty which that part of Ireland with which he was connected, had to struggle with was, the flight of those tenants who possessed capital, and the consequent danger of a great portion of the land becoming waste. He did not object to the Committee, as he thought it might perform many important services; but at the same time, he trusted that Government would not delay submitting the report of the Commission to the House for consideration. If they did they might depend upon it they would have to propose a grant next year for Munster, which would by that time be in as bad a condition as Connaught. He begged the attention of the House while he read a few sentences from a letter he had recently received from a gentleman, better able than any man he knew to come to a just conclusion as to the actual state of the south of Ireland. The hon. Member proceeded to read the letter in question, the substance of which was, that multitudes of large holders of land in Ireland were throwing up their farms; that thousands of acres were being surrendered—that a large extent of land must consequently be unproductive—that the owners had no money, no capital, and no credit wherewith to carry on their pursuits—that, to a great extent, the better class of farmers were leaving the country and emigrating to America—that many more were winding up and remaining at home, waiting the issue of events; and that by and by these latter might resume their former holdings, or take others at more moderate rents than heretofore. He (Mr. Monsell) assured the House that there was a vast emigration now going on from the south of Ireland, particularly from the port of Limerick, and that that emigration consisted not of the cottiers, or of persons without capital, but, on the contrary, that the capitalists were the persons who were going away, and that the persons for whom employment must be found were remaining. It was most important that some steps should be taken to remove the panic which was the cause of such a disastrous state of things. Was it not necessary, then, to avert the panic which was causing the evil?

He thought that Her Majesty's Government ought to be prepared in a very few days to introduce some measure to accelerate the division of the electoral districts, and to divert the poor-rates to the purposes of emigration, otherwise the capitalists would continue to go away: those of them who remained would be left with incumbered estates, and a miserable class of unemployed paupers would have to be employed, not from the exhausted resources of the country, but from the funds of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Mr. GRATTAN observed, that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Monsell) laboured under a mistake if he supposed that the evils of which he complained existed only in the county of Limerick, for they were general in Ireland. The capitalists were going away from every part of the country; and if the principle were to be adopted of leaving the ablebodied to be fed on charity, then the owners had better leave the country at once. The right hon. Baronet (Sir G. Grey) seemed to be a sort of red republican; for he appeared desirous of carrying out in Ireland measures which had utterly failed in France. If the Government did not change their policy, they would have to feed a population of eight millions.

Sir G. GREY begged it to be distinctly understood that he had not said anything to lead the hon. Gentleman to suppose they would attempt to feed eight millions of the people. The Government were determined to adhere to the principle of the Bill, and had no intention of retracing their steps.

Mr. S. CRAWFORD said, the reason the farmers of Ireland were emigrating and carrying away their money, was because they had no security for the investment of capital in that country. He wished to call the attention of the Government to this point—that as an accompaniment to any amendment of the Irish poor-law, a measure must be introduced to give security to the farmer for the improvement of the soil, which security he did not now possess. Industry would only exist where it had a right to that which industry created; and, in a country where the industrious man had no prospect of receiving a return for his labour, there could be no industry and no employment. A want of employment was the cause of all the evils in Ireland, and employment would be given if the necessary security were afforded to the industrious.

Mr. ST. GEORGE said, he wished to remark that much of the bad working of the poor-law was owing to the 4*l.* valuation clause. He thought that every man should be liable for the poor-rate for his own holding; but under the law as it now stood the Commissioners wished to get the name of the immediate lessor on their books wherever they possibly could succeed in doing so.

Mr. P. SCROPE expressed a hope that the Committee about to be appointed would be supplied by the Government with all the necessary statistical facts that would throw light on the affairs of Ireland, for facts were much more important than mere opinions delivered in the House. He hoped that the returns, of which notice had been given for a future day, would be submitted, tending to show the movements which had taken place among the population of Ireland during the last few years. The effect produced by clearances throughout the country during several years past should be stated, otherwise the Committee would scarcely know the effect of the narrowing of the area. The Committee should know how many tenants were evicted from their holdings for the last few years; they should also be made acquainted with facts relative to the condition of the people, the amount of emigration, and the number of vagrants passing through the country; and as these several returns were of essential importance to enable a right judgment to be formed, he hoped the right hon. Secretary for Ireland would furnish them.

Sir W. SOMERVILLE said, it was impossible to produce all the returns to which allusion had been made, but that every return he could give, calculated to throw light upon the subject, he should have great pleasure in producing.

Question put, and agreed to.

TROOPS IN IRELAND.

Mr. GRATTAN moved—

> "That there be laid before this House, Returns of the number of Troops of the Line or other Forces employed in the Insurrection in Ireland, as mentioned in Her Majesty's Speech from the Throne; together with the list and names of the killed and wounded, and the number and description of forces engaged on both sides:—And, of the amount of expenses and cost in sending Troops from Great Britain to Ireland, and in moving the several regiments and other armed forces in various parts of Ireland on the occasion of the said alleged Insurrection."

Mr. F. MAULE said that, from the manner in which the army in Ireland was disposed, the manner in which the officers had commanded, and the forbearance of the troops, no collision whatever had taken place between them and Her Majesty's subjects, and therefore he could give no return of killed and wounded. With reference to the expense of sending the troops to Ireland, he hoped the hon. Member for Meath (Mr. Grattan) would not put the Government to the trouble of searching the Admiralty and Commissariat Departments for the various items, as the search would occupy considerable time, and, if successful, would not convey any information of interest to the public. He had no objection to give a return of the number of troops stationed in Ireland during the three months of the anticipated outbreak.

Mr. GRATTAN said, his object in moving for the returns was to show that the word "insurrection" in the Queen's Speech did not mean insurrection.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

ARRESTS UNDER THE SUSPENSION OF THE HABEAS CORPUS ACT.

Mr. GRATTAN then moved—

> "For a return of the number and names of persons arrested under the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland, the length of imprisonment, and if let out on bail or otherwise."

Sir G. GREY said, there was no objection to grant this return. He could not give the offences charged against each individual, but the number and names of the persons arrested under the suspension of the Act would be laid on the table tomorrow.

Motion agreed to.

THE RAJAHSHIP OF SATTARA.

Mr. HUME moved—

> "For copies of any Despatch or Correspondence, secret or otherwise, from the Court of Directors of the East India Company to the Governor General of India in Council, sanctioned by the Commissioners for the Affairs of India, and communicating the decision of the Court on the question of the disposal of the Sattara State, in consequence of the death of the late Rajah; together with all Correspondence, secret or otherwise, between the Governments of India, from the 14th day of October, 1847, and not already laid before Parliament; as also, Copies of all Minutes recorded by Members of Council in India, and Dissents, Protests, or Minutes recorded by any Member or Members of the Court of Directors on that subject."

Motion agreed to.

House adjourned at half-past Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, February 6, 1849.

Minutes.] Public Bills.—1ª Marriage (Scotland); Registering Births, &c. (Scotland); Corrupt Practices at Elections.

NORTH WALES RAILWAY COMPANY.

On the Motion of Lord **MONTEAGLE**, Thomas King, a Servant of this House, Samuel Lethbridge, an Assistant Doorkeeper, Captain Harness, Secretary of the Railway Board, and W. B. Scoones, a Messenger of the said Board, were called in, and successively examined as to the Service of the Orders of this House of the 3rd and 25th of August last, for certain Accounts relating to the said Railway Company; and Robert Hogwood, a Doorkeeper of this House, was called in, and examined as to the Service of the Order of this House of the 5th of September last, for the Attendance, at the Bar of this House, of William Chadwick, Esq., Chairman, and John Marriner, Esq., late Secretary of the said Company.

Examination ordered to be printed.

INGROSSING, &c. OF BILLS.

The **LORD CHANCELLOR** acquainted the House, that the Clerk Assistant had prepared and laid on the table, in obedience to the resolutions of this House, a report of his communication with the authorities of the House of Commons.

The said report was ordered to be printed.

Then it was moved—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the best Mode for dispensing with the System of Ingrossment and Inrolment."

On Question, agreed to.

House adjourned to Thursday next.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, February 6, 1849.

Minutes.] New Writ.—For Stafford County (Southern Division) *v.* Viscount Ingestre, now Earl Talbot.

Public Bills.—1° Habeas Corpus Suspension (Ireland); Insolvent Members.

Petitions Presented. By Mr. John Towneley, from a Public Meeting held in the Mechanics' Hall, Beverley, and by Mr. Walter, from the Town of Nottingham, for an Alteration of the Law respecting the Church of England Clergy.—By Colonel Dunne, from the Board of Guardians of the Midleton Union, for an Alteration of the Poor Law (Ireland).—From the Grand Jury of the Nenagh Quarter Sessions, for an Alteration of the Poor Law (Ireland), and in favour of other Remedial Measures.—By Lord Ashley, from the Board of Guardians of the Bath Union, for an Alteration of the Sale of Beer Act.—By Mr. Chisholm Anstey, from the Proprietors of the River Lee, and Others, Inhabitants of the City of Cork,

for a Better Regulation of the Salmon Fisheries (Ireland).—By Mr. Gilbert Greenal, from the Inhabitants of Warrington, in the County of Lancaster, for Referring War Disputes to Arbitration.—By Mr. Perfect, from the Clergy, Magistrates, and Inhabitants of the Borough of Lewes, Sussex, for the Suppression of Promiscuous Intercourse.

INDIAN ARMY—HONORARY MEDALS.

Mr. HUME wished to know whether, as medals had been given to the Army for past services in the Peninsula, as well as to the Navy for the exploits of the last war, the veterans of the Armies of the Crown and the East India Company were to have a similar attention paid to them for the battles of Assaye, Lasswaree, Maheidpoor, Kirkee, &c. ?

Sir J. C. HOBHOUSE begged to state, in answer to the question put by his hon. Friend (Mr. Hume), that the medals could not be granted upon the occasions to which he alluded, as the regular course was that they should only be granted to the officers and men for those battles for which they had already been granted to the generals commanding, or other superior officers. If his hon. Friend would look to the order issued June 1, 1847, he would see that these were the conditions on which medals were to be granted. If they were to extend the occasions, it must be done by another order.

Mr. HUME wanted to know why the order was not extended to all ?

VANCOUVER'S ISLAND—THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.

The Earl of LINCOLN wished to know whether there would be any objection to lay on the table of the House the charter or grant of Vancouver's Island to the Hudson's Bay Company, and also any correspondence which might have passed on the subject since the last papers moved for in the past Session ? He wished also to know whether there would be any objection to lay on the table a report, which he was given to understand had been received from the officers appointed by the Governor General of Canada, under the direction of the Colonial Office, to investigate certain complaints made by persons inhabiting the Red River Settlement in the Hudson's Bay territory, as to the conduct of the Company's officers, with any correspondence relating thereto ?

Lord J. RUSSELL had no objection to lay on the table the papers first alluded to by the noble Earl, namely, those respecting the grant of Vancouver's Island. With respect to the report of which the noble Lord spoke, he was not aware whether the document was now in the Colonial Office; he would take care, however, that an inquiry should be made, and inform the noble Earl.

ECCLESIASTICAL REFORM.

Mr. HORSMAN wished to put some questions to the noble Lord at the head of the Government. First, with respect to the composition of the Ecclesiastical Commission, he begged to ask if the Government had any measure in preparation with a view to altering and making it more in accordance with the recommendations of the Committee who reported upon the subject in the last Session of Parliament ? Next, whether the noble Lord intended to propose any measure for the fusion of the episcopal and common funds ? Thirdly, whether the Government were prepared to legislate with regard to the reform of cathedral establishments, so as to render them more generally efficient and useful for the purposes of religious instruction ? And, lastly, whether they intended to propose any one or all such measures during the present Session ?

Lord J. RUSSELL: I certainly did not clearly understand the hon. Gentleman's (Mr. Horsman's) questions when he put them on a former night. With regard to the first, it is intended to propose a Bill in the present Session with respect to the composition of the Ecclesiastical Commission; and that measure will be founded partly upon the Bill that was formerly proposed to the House by the Government, and partly upon the report of the Committee to which he has alluded. With respect to the next question, as to the union of the episcopal and common funds, the Government have decided to propose a measure upon that subject also, and that, too, in the present Session. With regard to proposing changes in the cathedral establishments, the hon. Gentleman is aware that great reforms have already been made in those establishments; and I am certainly of opinion that further improvements may be made, but I cannot at present undertake to introduce any measure upon the subject.

THE VERNON GALLERY.

Mr. HUME asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether any steps had been taken, as recommended by the Select Committee of the House of Commons of the last Session, to provide a proper situation in the National Gallery for the reception of the valuable collection of paintings presented to the nation by Mr. Vernon?

Lord J. RUSSELL replied, that, so far as a further grant of public money was required to provide accommodation for the paintings, Government had not resolved upon any measure for that purpose. The present arrangements were, however, merely temporary.

THE SPANISH, PORTUGUESE, AND BRAZILIAN TARIFFS.

Viscount PALMERSTON said, that in the course of the speech of the hon. Member for Dorsetshire (Mr. Bankes) last night, that hon. Gentleman asked if the tariffs of Spain and of Portugal had been presented? In reply, he (Viscount Palmerston) begged to say, that they were presented in March last, and printed. The hon. Gentleman also asked whether any recent alteration had taken place in the tariff of Brazil? He (Viscount Palmerston) understood that an alteration had been ordered; but it was not to take effect until the 1st of January, 1850.

Mr. BRIGHT wished to know if the prospective operation of that alteration of the tariff of Brazil had reference to any alteration expected in the legislation of this House, or in the course which the British Government might take with regard to Brazil? He alluded especially to a Bill which was passed here in 1845, giving authority to English ships to seize Brazilian vessels which might be engaged in the slave trade. The postponement to 1850 seemed to be rather a lengthened postponement, and he wished to know if the Government understood it to have reference to any alteration of our policy which might be decided upon with respect to Brazil?

Viscount PALMERSTON: Speaking from recollection, I should say certainly not.

Mr. URQUHART asked the Foreign Secretary if he would lay on the table of the House the papers connected with the now concluded negotiations which led to the presence, in the course of last year, of a British squadron in the Bay of Naples.

Viscount PALMERSTON would do so at the proper time.

Mr. URQUHART wished to know when that time would be?

Viscount PALMERSTON could not say.

SUSPENSION OF THE HABEAS CORPUS ACT (IRELAND) BILL.

Sir GEORGE GREY: I rise, Sir, in pursuance of the notice given on the first night of the Session, to ask for leave to bring in a Bill to continue, for a limited period, the Act of last Session for suspending the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland. Sir, Her Majesty's Government would gladly have arrived at the conclusion, if they felt that they could have done so consistently with their duty, that the time had arrived when the extraordinary powers conferred by the Act of last Session, and the continuance of which I now propose to the House, could be entirely withdrawn, and when the ordinary powers of the law with which the Executive is, in ordinary times entrusted, would enable the Lord Lieutenant to adequately discharge the responsible duties attached to the office with which he is entrusted. Her Majesty's Government are deeply sensible of the gravity of the proposal which I have on their part now to make to the House. They are not unmindful of the objection which must and ought to be entertained against the temporary suspension of any portion of the constitutional rights of the people of any part of this realm; but they feel—at the same time that consistently with the most jealous regard to the liberty of the subject—a conviction has been entertained by the ablest statesmen, and in the best times, that there are occasions and circumstances in which the very spirit of the constitution demands its temporary suspension, in order to enable the Government of the country to maintain the constitution itself against the attacks of those who are seeking to effect its overthrow by secret plotting or open insurrection. And it was on one of those occasions, and circumstances of that kind, which, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, justified the appeal that they felt themselves obliged to make to Parliament in July last—an appeal to which Parliament responded with a promptitude which had the effect of giving a moral weight and efficacy to the measure then passed, which greatly increased its value. And it is with a deep sense of the responsibility attached to those to whom the administration of the affairs of Ireland is entrusted, that we have determined to recommend to Parliament to continue for a limited period those extraordinary powers that are now about to expire. In stating the grounds on which the Government have arrived at this conclusion, and on which we rest the proposal which I have to make, I admit—though indeed it is hardly an admission, for it is a notorious fact—that the circumstances of Ireland are now widely different from the circumstances under which my noble Friend (Lord J. Russell) asked the House to agree to the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in last July. But were I now able to state recent circumstances similar to those under which my noble Friend on that occasion justified the course which we pursued, the proofs would be wanting of the efficacy of the remedy that was then applied to the disease. If the insurrectionary movement which then existed, and which formed the ground of our appeal for additional powers, still continued, I might with truth be told that the measure which I now ask to have prolonged had proved a failure. I am not here to say that immediate insurrection is now likely to take place—that there are portions of the population now in arms against Her Majesty's Government—or that Her Majesty's troops are harassed by marching and countermarching in pursuit of men who have had the folly to raise the standard of rebellion, only to fly at the first sight of danger. No, Ireland is not now in the state in which she was in July last, and which then justified, in the opinion of the House, the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act; but still, especially after what has taken place in Parliament within the last few days, I must ask the House not to forget what the actual state of things then was. We have been told by hon. Gentlemen here, that the insurrection in July last was a mock insurrection, and that the precautions taken at that time by Her Majesty's Government were uncalled for and unnecessary. True, it may be called a mock insurrection in one sense; the followers of those disloyal men might with great truth say that they had been mocked and deceived in their hopes by those who had instigated them to attempts that they should have known were chimerical and impracticable. I do not pretend to say that, at any period of last Session, there was any, even the remotest, chance of the success of an insurrectionary movement in Ireland, or that any such movement could have taken place that would not have been speedily put down by Her Majesty's forces, and by the efforts of the loyal portion of the population, aided by that valuable force, the constabulary—a force that had been appealed to by the rebel leaders as being disaffected and disloyal, but that had to a man proved their loyalty and fidelity. But we must bear in mind the horrors through which the inhabitants of that country would have had to pass, and the blood which would have been shed, before any movement of that character could be entirely suppressed. Measures of this kind must be taken as measures of precaution as well as of cure; as measures for the prevention as well as for the suppression of crime. And here I may remark that one of the charges brought against the Government in July last was, that we had not sufficiently estimated the danger which then threatened the country, and that we had not sooner asked Parliament for the powers requisite to avert it. The House cannot have forgotten the circumstances which were then detailed, and it is unnecessary for me, therefore, to enter here upon them at any length—to read the exhortations that were published weekly in the newspapers established for the avowed purpose of giving life, energy, and organisation to the insurrectionary movement—exhortations to the people to take up arms against Her Majesty's troops—exhortations to seduce the troops and the constabulary from their allegiance, and instructions minutely describing the means by which if they would not be seduced, they might be obstructed and destroyed in the execution of their duty. These facts are not to be now overlooked. It is impossible to forget the establishment and organisation of clubs, which were spread through the country far beyond the limits of that portion of it where the people afterwards broke out into open insurrection. It is very well now for hon. Gentlemen to say that the insurrection was a mock insurrection, because it has failed, and that it never was of a serious character; but I would beg to remind them that I could not at that time enter this House without having letters placed in my hands which had just been received, describing the state of the country; that lead had been torn from the roofs of houses for the purpose of casting it into bullets; and that armed clubs were being established in parts of the country that had been hitherto peaceable, and to which the people flocked in defiance of the exertions of their landlords, in order to read those inflammatory articles, exciting them to treason and rebellion. I must remind the House that these were the circumstances under which Her Majesty's Government asked Parliament in July last to grant them those increased powers, and which every day's information since received has proved to have been well founded. I really feel that I should waste the time of the House by referring farther in detail to the circumstances which then occurred; but there are one or two documents to which I should wish very shortly to allude, in order to show the fallacy of this new doctrine, that the insurrection of last year was a mock insurrection, and that no necessity existed for the precautions that we had felt it necessary to take. I pass over the evidence given at the trials at Clonmel. I pass over the demeanour of the prisoners at those trials, and other matters that I might refer to, in confirmation of the statement of the Lord Lieutenant, in the letter which has been laid before Parliament—as to the absence of anything like regret or sorrow for their misconduct. On the contrary, as his Excellency observes, " Their regret is confined to their failure; and their hopes are directed to a more successful issue on the first favourable opportunity." But there is one letter to which I would beg to call the attention of the House—I allude to a letter of Mr. D'Arcy M'Ghee, one of the persons who took an active part in the insurrectionary movement, and which appeared in the *New York Morning Herald* of the 12th of October, 1848, and was published in most of the Irish journals afterwards. He begins by stating that several gentlemen in New York, who felt an interest in the affairs of Ireland, were anxious to have some intimation of the causes that led to its failure. He then proceeded :—

" There are three dates to be borne in mind in reference to this movement—the month of February, when the Continental revolutions began ; the 24th of July, when the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended ; and the harvest time, which, in Ireland, does not come until September."

He then went on to describe the moral-force and Young Ireland repealers :—

" In 1847 Young Ireland was busy in gaining over the inhabitants of the towns from ' moral force,' and, with the examples of Pius IX. and the revolutions of last spring, we succeeded. At any time during the last six months the townspeople were, in terms, committed to attempt a forcible expulsion of British power. This township organisation consisted of 500 clubs, in the total of about 30,000 men of the fighting age. Of these less than half were more or less armed in July, and the other half were acquiring arms as fast as they could, where money was scarce and military weapons dear. I have known half-employed tradesmen to stint themselves of their daily meals in order to buy a gun. Each club was divided into sections of ten men, with a master to each section, who knew personally each of his ten men. And let me assure our generous American friends, that though the clubs, as clubs, do not meet now together in Ireland, these sections nearly all exist, and form a nucleus of future movement, which cannot be reached or crushed. I assure them of this, both from knowledge of the system, and from the fact that, under the Disarming Act, twenty stands of arms have not yet been captured from the confederates."

He then goes on to describe the garrison of Dublin in July to have been 15,000 men—a statement in which there is an inaccuracy. He then proceeds :—

" The object of making the warfare a guerilla one was, to drag these concentrations to pieces, as the Spanish patriots did Napoleon's armies of occupation ; and by bringing them into districts where only infantry could act with ease, to put them more on a level with the raw levies of the people. The remainder of the course that might be taken would be to burn the towns and cities, as the Athenians did Athens, and the Russians Moscow. This, I believe, would have been the result on the news of the first royalist blood being drawn in the rural districts, whither these considerations and the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act had driven our leaders. But the rural districts would not move without their clergy, and the clergy were openly adverse or inactive. It is not fair to assume that there was no system of operations agreed on among the confederates. There was a feasible and well-understood plan. What it was, it is not advisible for me publicly to explain. Besides, I had rather a future success should publish it than I. I have no objection—quite the contrary—to explain it to any committee or circle of the friends of Ireland ; but printing it would serve no purpose except to arm the enemy."

I must say that, after a letter of that kind, coming from a person who had taken an active part in the insurrection itself, I cannot but feel astonished to find any man getting up in this House and saying that it was a mock insurrection. When that letter first appeared, its authenticity was denied, and it was stated in some of the Irish journals that the document was a fabrication of the Government, put forward for the purpose of propping up their case, and inserted through their means in the newspapers, in order to magnify the dangers which were to have been apprehended from the confederate movement. But I do not think that even those persons could now entertain those opinions. The letter was published in New York on the 12th of October, and the communication between these countries and America being now exceedingly rapid, the letter having appeared in the Irish papers, was sent back to America, with the comments made upon its authenticity, and Mr. D'Arcy M'Ghee, who is now the editor of a newspaper in New York, called the *Nation*, has since commented in his paper on these articles, and has re-asserted the facts which he had before stated in his former letter. I deem it unnecessary to quote what Mr. M'Ghee said on that subject, but it was a complete answer to those who ventured to assert that it was a mock rebellion. I certainly am not prepared to rest the case on this alone; but, after the assertions of those who contended that no insurrection was got up in Ireland, I could not refrain from quoting this remarkable evidence on the subject. I do not believe, however, that there is a second opinion prevailing among the majority of the Members of this House as to the real situation of Ireland in July last, and as to the circumstances then existing having justified the Government in asking for the powers which were then granted to them. These powers were granted but for a limited time. It has been the uniform practice on every occasion on which it has been unfortunately found necessary for Parliament to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act, to fix the suspension for a limited period only. With regard to the Act passed towards the close of the last Session of Parliament, the limitation was fixed with reference to the usual period for the meeting of Parliament, in order that Parliament on meeting again might be able to decide as to whether these powers should expire, or be again revived, and that is the question now presented to us. But, in dealing with this question in its present form, as to the continuance of a measure now in force, we must view it in a different light from that of an original proposition to enact the law. It was originally proposed as a measure necessary to put down an insurrection actually in progress at the time, but not then limited to the time requisite for this immediate purpose. The suppression of an insurrection might be the work of a day, or of a week, or of a month, but the powers might be required to prevent its renewal, and to guard against the danger of its bursting again into a flame when the opportunity offered. That Act being about to expire, the Government asks for a renewal of the powers conferred by it; and the question which we have to ask ourselves is, whether, looking at the recent occurrence of these events—looking at the spirit prevailing in these disaffected parts of the country, and looking at the character of the club organisation, which they had the authority of Mr. D'Arcy M'Ghee for saying still existed—can we say that the time has arrived when it would be safe to take off these restraints, and when there is no longer any danger of a recurrence of those proceedings which compelled us last year to ask for the powers intrusted to us. I admit that this must be a matter of opinion. I admit that there is not an insurrection imminent or flagrant, to call for the prompt exercise of such powers; but has all alarm disappeared? Do circumstances no longer exist which require the temporary continuance of a law, the prompt enactment of which had so great an effect in inspiring confidence in the minds of the well-affected, and striking terror into the hearts of the disaffected? The House is already aware of the views entertained by the Lord Lieutenant, as expressed in the letter to which I have already referred; and though I am not able to quote extracts from the communications that have been made to the Lord Lieutenant, because they have not been laid before Parliament, and are necessarily of a confidential character, still I may assure the House that the Lord Lieutenant has collected information from every available source; and, after the full and anxious consideration which the importance of the matter justifies, he has come to the conclusion that it was his duty—a duty from which he could not shrink—to recommend the Government to ask Parliament for a continuance of the powers vested in him by the Act of last Session. The Lord Lieutenant thus expresses himself:—

> "It was with deep regret that on a former occasion I felt myself compelled to ask for the enactment of this measure, but circumstances have since fully confirmed my opinion of its urgent necessity, and I can have no doubt that the course then adopted by Her Majesty's Government, and the moral effect produced by the almost unanimous support which the Bill received in Parliament, mainly contributed to the suppression of the rebellious movement which unhappily broke out in this country. While availing myself of the extraordinary power confided to me by the Act, it has been my earnest endeavour to limit its operation as far as possible, and to confine the deprivation of personal liberty to the cases of those individuals who were actually engaged in treasonable designs, or who, by encouraging the disaffected, endangered the peace and tranquillity of the country. No instance occurred of any arrest taking place except on sworn informations; no person was retained in custody longer than the public safety appeared to require; and, although the number of individuals whom it was my painful duty to place in temporary confinement was considerable, having amounted in all, at different times, to about 120, yet, considering the extent to which treasonable organisation had been carried, not only in the metropolis, but in several

counties of Ireland, the number can hardly be said to exceed what might have been anticipated. The secrecy afforded by the enforcement of the law, and the conviction that its provisions would only be applied against those whose conduct had rendered their detention absolutely necessary, has been felt by the community at large; and the restoration of order in place of that which for a time was a reign of terror, has been hailed with universal satisfaction. But on the part of those engaged in the late treasonable movement, no indication whatever of sorrow or repentance for their misdeeds has been observed. Their regret is confined to their failure, and their hopes are directed to a more successful issue on the first favourable opportunity; nor is there any reason to believe (and upon this point I have collected information from various persons on whose judgment and local knowledge I could rely) that the recent orderly conduct of the people in the districts where disturbances prevailed or were threatened, proceeds from any improved feeling, as regards either the law or the Executive Government. The total absence of support of the authorities in their endeavours to suppress insurrection, the renewed attempts at rebellion in the vicinity of the town where the leaders of the movement were being brought to justice, and the disregard of proclamations requiring the surrender of arms, are facts which indicate that, however the failure of past attempts at insurrection may have weakened the confidence of the disaffected, the feeling which gave rise to and encouraged that movement still remains unchanged, and would again become active upon any occasion that appeared to offer even a distant prospect of success."

I shall not again quote from this letter of Mr. D'Arcy M'Ghee, in which he refers to the "vice of loyalty" as being dead among those with whom he was engaged, and in which he alludes to the probable recurrence of a favourable opportunity which might justify, in their opinion, a repetition of the attempts of July last. Without placing much importance on individual circumstances, I may say that the tendency of all the evidence that we have collected leads to the same impression—and confirms the opinion expressed in the paragraph I have just read from the letter of the Lord Lieutenant. Even within the last few days an advertisement has appeared in Dublin, which I shall beg leave to read to the House. It says—

"An extraordinary publication will appear on the first Saturday of March, 1849, denominated *The Clubbist*, being a selection of the most spirit-stirring effusions, extracted from the pages of the proscribed press, and dedicated to the young men of Ireland. Weekly selections from the *New York Nation*, by T. D. M'Ghee; each number to consist of sixteen pages, to be completed in thirty numbers. Price, one penny each. This will form one of the richest and raciest instruments for the revivification of our 'poor old country.'"

This shows that these clubbists are ready to take advantage of the expiration of the existing law; and I believe there are at this moment Gentlemen in the House who can testify to the truth of the information which has reached the Lord Lieutenant with regard to the number of these clubbists in Dublin, and to their being ready to resume their organisation. At all events, there has been great alarm expressed on the part of many loyal subjects of Her Majesty, lest an opportunity of doing so should be afforded them, from the want of power in the hands of the Government. I trust that the proceedings of the last few months have undeceived many, and that the bulk of the people will no longer be the dupes of those whose vanity or vain-glory has led them to delude the people, and to involve them in rebellion and bloodshed. I believe that many of those people are thankful for the Act of last Session, carried into effect, as it has been, with the utmost clemency and forbearance, and that its continuance would be received by them with satisfaction. And here I cannot refrain, in justice to the Lord Lieutenant, from referring to the manner in which he has exercised the power placed in his hands. I do not, indeed, ask for a renewal of these powers, on the ground that in the hands of the Lord Lieutenant there is no danger of their being abused; but still the fact should not be overlooked, that the manner in which his Excellency has exercised the powers entrusted to him has called forth from all classes expressions of confidence and approval. It is but due to the Lord Lieutenant to acknowledge, on the part of the Government, the fact, that throughout the whole period that this Act has been in operation it has not been enforced in any case in such a manner as to call forth a single complaint. In a second address of the corporation of Dublin—a body not likely to estimate lightly the liberties of their fellow-subjects—they tendered to the Lord Lieutenant their heartfelt thanks for the temperate, able, and humane manner in which his Excellency had exercised the powers entrusted to him by Parliament for the suppression of the late unfortunate disturbances. There is one circumstance to be borne in mind with reference to the present question. When Parliament was asked to continue the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act at other times, other Acts of a very stringent character were enforced contemporaneously with the Suspension Act. This was the case in 1803, when the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act was renewed, the Act for the Establishment of Martial Law having been renewed at the same time. In 1822, an Insurrection Act was passed at the same time with the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act; and that Act was continued for a long period, extending over many years. On the present occasion the only measure in existence of an analogous character was the Act passed at the beginning of the last Session for the protection of life and property in Ireland. That Act was still in force; but there was no Insurrection Act in Ireland as at the periods he had alluded to; and such being the case, if Parliament suffered the Act for the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act to expire, there was serious ground for apprehension that the ordinary powers possessed by the Government would be found insufficient to ensure the preservation of order and tranquillity in Ireland. The hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. John O'Connell) alluded last night, with considerable displeasure, to a passage in the letter of the Lord Lieutenant, which had reference to political agitation. I have had no communication from the Lord Lieutenant since the speech of the hon. Gentleman was delivered; but I have reason to know that he did not intend to refer to political agitation for reasonable and constitutional objects, but that his desire is to prevent agitation for impracticable objects which has been carried on in Ireland for a considerable period—which led to the events of last year—which forms the bane of Ireland; the bane of her industry; the obstacle to the development of her commerce, and of her internal resources, and to every social improvement; and to that agitation he is of opinion that a check ought to be opposed, conceiving it to be of the utmost importance that Ireland should enjoy repose from such agitation, in order that the attention of the inhabitants should be directed to the pursuit of those objects on which the permanent interests and future welfare of the people depend. On this subject I wish to read one passage from the answer of the Lord Lieutenant to the address of the corporation of Dublin. His Lordship says—

> "On the part of Her Majesty's Government, and on my own, I can assure you that there exists a sincere desire carefully to investigate the causes of discontent in Ireland, and, as far as possible, to remove them by improved legislation. To rely, however, upon legislation alone as a cure, or even a palliation, for evils that are chiefly social in their character, would be to foster a vain delusion, and to neglect those remedies which are within the reach of individuals, and must depend on the strenuous and manly exertion of every class in the community, rather than on the wisest enactments of Parliament; but that which, above all things, Ireland now stands most in need of as the basis of her future improvement, is internal tranquillity. No progress is possible—no country ever did or can prosper under a system of political agitation which arrays against each other men who should be united for their common good, and which is alike fatal to the pursuits of industry and the employment of capital, and to that social order upon which public confidence depends. This system has long been practised in Ireland. I need not dwell upon the results it has produced; but I will venture to express my earnest hope that the warnings of experience may not be disregarded, and that the ingenuity and talents by which Irishmen are pre-eminently distinguished, may henceforward be devoted to the true interests of this country, and to the improvement of those great natural capabilities which might, long since, have rendered Ireland a land of comfort and prosperity."

Such, Sir, are the sentiments of the Lord Lieutenant, and they are sentiments in which I entirely concur; and I hope that whatever opinion may be entertained with regard to his recommendation for a continuance of the Suspension Act, there can be but one opinion as to the excellence of the advice contained in the passage that I have just read. I trust that we shall act in the spirit of it, and not look to legislation, or at least to legislation alone, for a remedy for the social evils by which Ireland is afflicted. I ask hon. Gentlemen—and I say this with no view of shrinking from the responsibility which belongs to the Government—I ask hon. Gentlemen not to look exclusively to Government and to Parliament for a remedy for the evils which afflict Ireland. The remedy is, to a great extent, in their own hands. Let each do his utmost by setting a good and useful example—let each stimulate the other to the exercise of his proper duties, and they will accomplish for their own country those benefits and that improvement which no Government and no legislation can ever secure. For these reasons which I have stated, I ask you for the limited continuance of an Act the powers of which are exercised directly by the Executive Government, under its responsibility to the Crown and to Parliament. Her Majesty's Government are anxious to ask for a continuance of those powers only for the shortest period that they think consistent with a due regard to the public interests. Last year, at the close of the Session, Parliament assented to the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act for a period of seven months, having reference to the period when Parliament was to meet again, and to the time requisite for the consideration of the subject. We are now at the beginning of the Session, and we propose that the Act should be renewed for a period of six months from the expiration of the existing Act. An opportunity will then be afforded for considering, before the close of the Session, whether the powers conferred by it may be suffered to expire. I now move, therefore, that leave be given to bring in a Bill to continue, for a time to be limited, the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland.

Mr. JOHN O'CONNELL said, that before proceeding to the consideration of the Motion before the House, he wished to refer for a moment to the remark made by the right hon. Baronet (Sir G. Grey) with reference to his comments on the letter of the Lord Lieutenant. He wished that House, as the guardians of the constitution, to take notice that a Member of the Executive was to decide what objects were practicable and what were not practicable. He thought it too bad that any Member of the Executive should presume to say to the subjects of a free country that they were not to agitate for the repeal of an Act of Parliament because he thought it impracticable. To be sure the doctrine was now only used with reference to Ireland—to that portion of the empire which was hereditarily insulted and ill-treated, but which treatment caused their Ambassador to be insulted in Spain, and which would one day bring a heavy responsibility on the head of this country. But if they allowed such a system to be introduced even with respect to Ireland, a wicked Minister might hereafter try the same law in England also. Let every Irish Gentleman who heard him, no matter what his politics might be, remember that for the next six months, and indeed it might be later—for the Government had given indications of renewing it again for an indefinite period—but that, at any rate, for the next six months, they dared not hold any meetings in Ireland for any purpose whatever without first going to the Lord Lieutenant hat in hand, and saying to him, "May it please your Excellency to convey to us your opinion whether our object is practicable or not; if you think not, we are your slaves—you have despotic power over us—you can tear us from our business and from our families at your pleasure. You can drag us to gaol without the power of resistance from any one, and no matter whether the information sworn against us be false or true." There was a Gentleman, a Member of that House, who could verify what he was about to state, that in one large and important county in Ireland the subjects had been for the moment restrained from petitioning with regard to a grievance—he believed it was the poor-law—but certainly some grievance which had nothing whatever to do with politics. And why was this? From the fear the leading men in the county entertained that Lord Clarendon might disapprove of their conduct, and drag them to prison. If that hon. Member was now in his place, he was sure he would bear him out in every word he had said. He was not, therefore, conjuring up some vain fear, he was not exaggerating the grounds of opposition, when, Heaven knew, these grounds were strong enough already. The hon. Member further said, that the parties proposed to wait till the 1st of March; that they did not like to meet sooner, as they did not know how Lord Clarendon would take their meeting before that time. Now let the House take that one fact along with the plain statement of the right hon. Baronet (Sir G. Grey), and the equally plain declarations in the Lord Lieutenant's letter, that it was intended to abrogate the constitution, and to put the liberty of the subject in Ireland under the power of one man. He could not prevent them doing this; he would, indeed, do his duty to the last; but he knew how powerless he and his friends were. The hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume) had given them to understand that they were not to expect anything from those whom in former times the Irish Members had often stood by. But if this act of tyranny was consummated, it would be the fault of the British House of Commons. A great part of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, and a still greater part of the letter of Lord Clarendon, was taken up with talk about disaffection in Ireland. The noble Earl the Lord Lieutenant calls upon us for a renewal of the powers of this Bill, on account of the spirit of disaffection existing in Ireland. But he had given no proof of this statement. He had quoted from the letter of a gentleman who was considered of very little account in this country—who was disregarded—who was in fact considered as a mere underling in that section of the party to which he belonged; but here the Government had elevated the refugee and the rebel to an equality with the Lord Lieutenant; and what he chose to write in an

American newspaper was brought forward as matter of grave accusation against the whole people of Ireland, and as justifying the destruction of their liberties. The right hon. Baronet (Sir G. Grey) said that the House of Commons had frequently suspended the Habeas Corpus Act before. They had done so: there could be no doubt of the fact. It would be hard—unfortunately, it would be very hard indeed—to point to any measure which had not been tried with regard to Ireland during the last forty-nine years. But the House would find that it was equally correct—and he referred to *Hansard* for the proof of it—that on no occasion, even when the liberties of the subject were least regarded, when external danger was most imminent—when confusion was at its greatest pitch—when we were at the height of a dangerous war; on no such occasion was there any interference with constitutional principles, much less any interference so great as the present, recommended on such slight and miserably inadequate grounds. The right hon. Baronet the Home Secretary admitted that there was at present no fear of an insurrection—he admitted that there was a loyal spirit among a great portion of the people, and therefore he admitted that the Bill was not wanted to put down insurrection at the present moment; but he asked these powers in order to save the Government the inconvenience of applying at some future time to Parliament. It was a matter of convenience that the Government should have these powers. One of his reasons was convenience to the Government. No doubt it would be exceedingly convenient to the Government, and exceedingly convenient to the Lord Lieutenant, that they should be allowed to act upon their sole discretion, without the necessity of accounting to any one; and no doubt it would be exceedingly convenient that Her Majesty's Ministers should not be required to meet Parliament, to meet the obstructions which would there occur, to argue points, and to meet objections. Nothing could be more inconvenient than these obstructions. But then it was no less true that the constitution recognised these obstructions and checks upon the power of the Government; and were they to be told that in the case of Ireland all these obstructions were to be removed, and all the facilities of despotism to be given to the nominally constitutional Government of Ireland? He trusted, therefore, they would hear no more of the argument of convenience. No doubt the Lord Lieutenant would be gratified by being entrusted with this power; it was natural for all men to desire power; it was natural for men, when they had power, to desire more: but was it fair—was it right—was it honest—that this House should give the powers now asked for, on such reasons as had been assigned? But the right hon. Baronet (Sir G. Grey) had, as an additional argument, put forward Mr. D'Arcy M'Ghee's letter. Now, he considered it an insult to Irishmen, that this letter, the production of a rebel and a refugee, who was anxious to sell his newspaper, and therefore adapted his style to the wild and rabid tone of those among whom he was cast, should be brought forward as an actual, tangible, and substantive ground on which this Bill was founded. There could be no doubt that that individual was anxious to make his paper circulate among the warlike sympathisers of America. Were they, therefore, to take everything upon his *ipse dixit?* and because he said that the clubs were still in existence, were they to ask for a law which did not strike at the clubs, because they had plenty of law for that purpose already; and if they had not, let the Government come down to the House and ask for additional powers. But since the letter had been referred to at all, he asked the right hon. Baronet (Sir G. Grey) why he had not read the whole of it—why he had only read those parts which contained Mr. D'Arcy M'Ghee's allegations? He had not read one word of those parts in which Mr. D'Arcy M'Ghee abuses the clergy, and abuses some of the lay agitators, and abuses the people who had not thrown themselves into the struggle. There was not one word read of Mr. D'Arcy M'Ghee's confession, that by the indifference of the people, and the efforts of some of those parties who had been engaged in popular agitation, the insurrection met with its first blow. Unfortunately, he had not imagined that the Irish people would be insulted by the production of such a letter, and, therefore, he had not brought a copy of it with him; he was, in consequence, unable to read that part of Mr. D'Arcy M'Ghee's letter, in which he stated that from the moral-force agitators the insurrection received its check. The right hon. Baronet (Sir G. Grey) had not read that part of the letter, because it made against his case, and because he wanted to carry his Bill. If the right hon, Baronet expected any advantage from such a course, he could not compliment him upon his candour. But he feared he would succeed. He knew how powerless the Irish Members were. The English Members had their hands full of the affairs of their own great empire; they could not attend to the affairs of Ireland in ordinary matters; and they did not attend to them, except when the object was to make the Government of Ireland easy to the delegates they sent there, and to stifle the complaints of Ireland. The right hon. Baronet had ended his speech by a flourishing declaration that the people of Ireland ought not to depend upon what the Government could do for them, for the power of legislation could do little. But what was the right hon. Baronet doing to-night? He was declaring that the Government could do everything for evil, but that they were not to depend upon it for benefits. They were called upon to accept a Government whose object was to crush the constitution, and to stifle complaint in Ireland. Yes, the right hon. Baronet liked Government interference—he relished it—he recommended it so long as it was used for evil towards Ireland; but he had not one word to say with regard to the interference of Government in the attempt to improve and to raise up the fallen condition of her people. He would now come to the Lord Lieutenant's letter. There were several statements in that document which were not quite true. He said, that he had confined the operation of the Act, so far as the deprivation of personal liberty was concerned, to the cases of persons who were actually engaged in treasonable designs. Now, he could cite one flagrant instance in the south of Ireland, where this was not the case. He did not mean to deny that a great deal of consideration had been exercised; but he knew one case of a party who had not been concerned in the insurrection at all, and who still languished in prison, though not a single allegation had been brought forward against him. He had been a strong writer against the Young Ireland party, some of whom had been engaged in the insurrection. He thought it was also a mis-statement, that a rebellious organisation existed in the different counties; and the proof of that was that in no county, except perhaps one, had there been an actual outbreak. Then the Lord Lieutenant said, that there had been no indication of repentance on the part of those who were engaged in the treasonable outbreaks. But he would ask, would they, in the case of a murder, proclaim a whole county? And if not, why should they put a whole nation out of the pale of the law for one outbreak that burst forth in a single corner? Then the Lord Lieutenant proceeded to complain that there was not an improved feeling towards the Executive Government. Now, he (Mr. J. O'Connell) had never heard that the precept, "Love your enemies," was to be carried out so far as that they should love a Government to which they were not indebted for a single benefit — a Government which had not accepted the advice which was given to them by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth, who, on resigning office, had sketched out a course of policy which ought to be adopted towards Ireland—a Government which had been in power for three years, and had during that time passed four Coercion Bills, and was now about to pass a fifth—and yet they were to love that Government, to admire, to reverence, to adore it; or, if they did not, they would have this Bill forced upon them. He did not see that the Government had any claims upon their love. If they thought they had such claims, let them show them —let them go before a Committee and prove the grounds on which there ought to be a good feeling towards them on the part of Ireland. They might say, we have been three years in office, and see what we have done? For years we promised Ireland a franchise; we resisted the attempt of a noble Lord, now a Member of another House, to settle that question; we determined to extend to Ireland a liberal franchise; we promised it again and again; and now, after being three years in power, we have done—what? we have not extended the franchise to Ireland. Then see what we have done with regard to the relations between landlord and tenant. We brought in a Bill which was cordially supported by all the Irish Members. We confessed there was danger in the old relations; we determined and we promised to arrest that danger; and now, having been in promise for three years, we have not redeemed our promise. Then they might go to the question of the corporations, and tell how ungrateful the Irish people were, because the privileges which the English corporations possessed were not given to the Irish corporations, though this liberal and reforming Government had been in power for three years. These were the titles to the love, the veneration, the admiration of the Irish people which this Ministry possessed;

and because the Irish people failed in manifesting love, the personal liberty of the subject was to be taken away, and the constitution of the country was to be destroyed. The third reason given by the Lord Lieutenant was, that there had recently been a renewed attempt at insurrection. This paragraph of the Lord Lieutenant's letter was the most astonishing of anything he had yet heard. A few idle boys went one night to a place called the Wilderness, in the neighbourhood of Clonmel. There were not more than twenty or thirty of them altogether; but a local paper, which was opposed to the popular sentiments, published a report that 2,000 men had assembled there. Immediately there was an expedition of cavalry, infantry, and police to the place, and it captured thirteen men and boys—he was not sure but there were some old women among the number. They brought them to Clonmel—they dragged them to the bar of justice—they kept them in prison for three days, and then they said to them —you may go about your business. He said it was an insult to Irishmen to bring forward such a reason as this. He would tell the Gentlemen of England and Scotland that it was also an insult to them, because common sense and common justice were insulted by such an argument being put forward. Then it was said that the arms were not given up. The answer to that was, that they ought to get a more stringent Arms Bill. They had an Arms Bill now in existence, and it had never been complained of. If the choice was to be made, he would say that of the two evils he would choose the least; and rather than have the constitutional liberties of the country taken away, he would be ready to agree to any Arms Bill of reasonably increased severity, if only they avoided domiciliary visits at night, which would be an intolerable grievance upon the people of Ireland. But did the Government know this secret—they who pretended to know such a great deal about Ireland—did they know this, that these very clubbists, these poor starving creatures, who had, perhaps, bought an old musket for half-a-crown, did they know where, two days afterwards, those muskets would be? Would they be treasured up in Her Majesty's Armoury? Most probably not. Would they then be found in the ranks of intending insurrectionists? Certainly not. Where then would they be? Why, in the pawnbrokers' shops; and if they went to those shops, they would find the arms which they were so anxious about, without the necessity of suspending the Habeas Corpus Act. But now he came to what he believed to be the real reason of the Lord Lieutenant. The Lord Lieutenant dared to charge those who had taken part in political agitation with having encouraged the insurrectionary feeling. This was a most audacious calumny; and he was astonished that any individual, who was not a Member of that House, should dare to charge men who were as pure-minded as he could be, with a connexion with men who had excited the people to insurrection and bloodshed. Let the House recollect, that this agitation, which the Lord Lieutenant denounced, had been tried before the Judges of the land. He was the only one of the eight traversers now present, and he could speak from personal experience of the subject. Everything that could be brought against them was crammed into the monster indictment; but the Judges of the land declared that agitation for a repeal of the Union was not a treasonable object. Even while that trial was going on, and during the three months of their unjust imprisonment, the Association met regularly week after week in pursuit of that which the Lord Lieutenant now declared to be an impracticable object. and there was not the whisper of an attempt to put them down. But now, because the meetings of the Association had vexed Lord Clarendon, because they had annoyed him by criticising the lectures which he seemed so fond of delivering upon every imaginable subject—because they had subjected him to ridicule, his vanity was hurt, his repose was disturbed, and, therefore, the Gentlemen of England must compliment him by putting down that constitution in Ireland which they would rather die than see interfered with in their own country. He knew it was altogether idle for him to delay the House upon these topics, and yet it was a solemn matter which was under their consideration. Let them recollect that this Bill was directed against popular agitation; and let them recollect that political agitation was the lever which Englishmen had used in removing local tyranny, and was the mainspring of all their liberties; let them observe, that if they had been told that the freedom of the press, the right of petition, and other sacred rights of which they were justly proud—if they had been told that these were impracticable objects, neither they nor their ancestors would have borne it. And did they expect that Irishmen would? Yes, Irishmen must. They were a perishing people—the strength of the country was gone in the repeated migrations—they were divided and disunited—split into almost as many factions and parties as there were individuals. England had nothing now to fear from them, and might, therefore, be bold, and might throw aside disguise; it would no longer be necessary to wear the thin veil under cover of which they had formerly attacked the constitution of Ireland; and, therefore, with frank tyranny they declared that Irishmen should not seek for the repeal of an offensive Act of Parliament. But the time might come when they would bitterly remember this. He said, the Irish Members would not submit to this. He had spoken without concert with others—he had merely uttered what appeared to him must be the feelings of every man who felt that he must be debased and degraded for ever, if he tamely submitted to this unconstitutional wrong. It might be that resistance was idle at that moment; but if so, the greater was their guilt in bringing forward such a measure as this at a time when the people were so utterly stricken down that he did not believe, even if the man whose power over the hearts of his countrymen had been greater than that of any other individual—one whose loss was now severely felt—if he were now alive, he did not think he would be able to rouse the people into an effort against this new outrage. Despair—utter, hopeless, dread despair—had settled down upon the people. But though the attempt to evoke a feeling against this measure might not be successful, still the attempt would be made. At any rate, the Irish Members would try in their own persons whether the right of the subject was to be utterly trampled upon, and the right of the constitution utterly violated in Ireland. The right hon. Baronet (Sir G. Grey) made an allegation, in support of which he brought forward no proofs that political agitation was mixed up with insurrection, and had led to it. Could the right hon. Baronet be aware of what had occurred in Ireland during the last two years? Had they not read the letter of Mr. D'Arcy M'Ghee, or would they credit one part of that letter and not another? In that letter there was reference to the expulsion—for actually it was an expulsion, though the gentlemen refused to resign their places in the Association—to the expulsion of those gentlemen who afterwards became prominent in the insurrection, because they would not be confined within the limits of legal and constitutional agitation—because they said, they would have a liberty beyond that, and said they would not be bound by the principles which the constitution had established, within which agitation was to be carried on—these gentlemen, because they would not be so bound, had to leave the Association. Periodically, month after month, document after document appeared from the Repeal Association, repudiating the doctrine of physical force, and every sort of agitation except that which was constitutional. The Association did everything possible to prevent those young men from entering into any society which should adopt the doctrines of physical force; and at length, finding all their efforts unavailing, they broke off the conference altogether, and separated themselves from them; and yet, after all, the conduct of these very young men was now brought forward as an argument to bolster up a case against the repealers generally. But it should be made known how contradictory was the conduct of the Government and its supporters. They recognised in England the right of constitutional agitation for the repeal or alteration of any Act of Parliament, whilst they declared that in Ireland the repeal of a certain Act was an impracticable object, and that therefore the constitution should be suspended, and the exercise of a constitutional right subjected to the sole will and pleasure of the Chief Governor of Ireland. If the House of Commons gave a hearty support to such a proposition, it would be playing false to all its traditions and its principles, and would thereby inflict a greater wound upon the constitution of the country than had ever been given by all the insurrections that had ever taken place amongst the people. There were some hon. Members who had stood by Ireland on previous occasions, and from his heart he thanked them for their past support. Now, when Ireland was no longer regarded, or only thought of to be oppressed and coerced, he trusted those hon. Members would again stand by her. He trusted that those hon. Members who were now agitating for changes which were declared by many to be impracticable in England, would not oppose him. He regretted to hear the hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume), whose exertions in the cause of reform had entitled him to so much respect, speak upon the subject of coercion to Ireland, on the preceding evening, in a tone of levity, and say that he would vote for the measure. Now that the West Indian slaves were emancipated, were the Irish, the only remaining slaves, to be excluded from the hon. Member's sympathy? For slaves they were. Their limbs indeed were not manacled, but there were chains upon their souls. The right hon. Baronet (Sir G. Grey) had said in his speech that he did not place any of his demands upon the grounds of special personal confidence in Lord Clarendon, yet he continually dwelt upon the manner in which that noble Lord had used his powers, and expressed his hope that they would not be used again. Now, he (Mr. J. O'Connell) did not think that Lord Clarendon was entitled to gratitude. He had said in Ireland, upon some occasions, that the noble Lord had acted extremely well. But the reason he praised him was because he had not armed the extreme Orangemen of the north of Ireland against their Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen—because he did not sharpen the bayonet of religious war. But let them look at his conduct in other matters. When Lord Clarendon first went to Ireland, he professed a great anxiety to consult the opinions of persons of all parties, and to adopt their suggestions as far as he possibly could without detriment to the public service. He invited those who might be called the heads of the popular party to give him their opinions, and he specially invited the Roman Catholic archbishops to a conference. They did not wish to go, because their past experience had led them to hope very little from such an interview; but out of respect to his office they waited upon his Excellency. He received them with that courtesy which might be expected, and the conference ended most amicably: but since that period he had not even shown the least wish to avail himself of one of their suggestions. Even in the affair of the colleges the Government were going to war with the people of Ireland upon a question affecting their religion. Was their condition so reassuring that their religious feelings might be tampered with? However, that was a question to which he had merely alluded in passing. To return to his subject: Lord Clarendon invited the archbishops merely, as it would appear, to inflict a personal insult upon them. Now, he impeached Lord Clarendon (having no hope of a graver impeachment being permitted to be brought against him) with not having met the spirit of insurrection in Ireland in time. Before matters came to extremities, in 1848, there were many articles in the newspapers, and many speeches delivered and reported, which undoubtedly infringed the law. Confederation speeches were allowed to go on, although their violence gave offence to the other repeal party. But the fact was that division amongst the popular party in Ireland was encouraged, because the Government wished to divide and so to weaken them. He had also to charge the Government with misconduct in the affair of the late State trials. They had said they could not get verdicts against the parties indicted. Why could they not? In the case of one of the jurors, named Fitzgerald, who refused to agree to a verdict of guilty against one of the State prisoners, the noble Earl, in commenting upon the result, cited the example of Mr. Fitzgerald, who was a Catholic, and a repealer, as a proof that Catholics and repealers could not be trusted. But what was the fact? Another juror, who was a Protestant, had agreed with Mr. Fitzgerald in his view of the case. Yet the noble Earl withheld that fact, and cited only the instance of the Catholic repealer, and he had never given any explanation that he (Mr. J. O'Connell) heard of, of his conduct in the matter. He accused the noble Earl of not applying to ordinary laws to repress disaffection, whilst there was time to do so, and that when at length it had proceeded to extremity, he had asked for powers beyond the constitution. He further accused Lord Clarendon of tampering with the jury lists. On the trial of Mr. Meagher for high treason, the high sheriff made out a panel for the eminently Roman Catholic county of Tipperary, which contained only eighteen Catholics, and 300 Protestants, thereby proving that a power of setting aside Catholics had been exercised. And how had Lord Clarendon defended himself? In the reply which he gave to a memorial that had been presented to him upon the subject, he said, in the first place, that he had no control over the acts of the high sheriff or the law officers of the Crown. But that was no answer; it was an evasion of the charge. His Attorney General had adopted and defended the proceeding, and the objectionable panel returned by the high sheriff. In the next place, the Lord Lieutenant said that no such principle as the exclusion of Roman Catholics had been adopted. That, again, was an evasion.

Such a principle had certainly never been put forward, but the practice was adopted; and it mattered very little whether or not a man put forward the principle of intending to rob you, if, practically, he did rob you. Again, the noble Earl had alleged that Protestants had been set aside as well as Catholics. But that was altogether beside the question, the fact being that the Attorney General had in every case retained twelve Protestants upon the juries, and set aside all the Catholics. That fact the Lord Lieutenant never attempted to answer, and until he had answered it he never could be acquitted. He need not have acted as he had done. There were repealers, certainly, who would hardly have found verdicts of guilty, but there were many others who would; and he (Mr. J. O'Connell) asserted that the noble Earl might safely have gone to trial with repealers upon the juries. But when people saw that the Government was not a paternal one—when they came to the conclusion that it was not entitled to the affections of the people, it was no wonder that one or two men should have been found upon the juries of the earlier trials who began to bring constitutional questions with the Government into discussion, and who considered that that Government had forfeited its right to their allegiance. He was not defending such men—he was only describing human nature. In conclusion, he would refer to some of the former cases in which coercion similar to the present suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act had been applied to Ireland. He had come prepared with several quotations, and allusions to various times. But as the right hon. Baronet (Sir G. Grey) had not thought fit to cite them, he (Mr. J. O'Connell) would confine himself to only a very few of those he had prepared. The right hon. Baronet the Secretary of State for the Home Department had alluded to the case of 1805. He did not dwell upon it—he seemed rather glad to fly from it the moment he had touched it, as though the parallel had struck him on the moment as being rather unfortunate. At that period England was at war with Napoleon. It was quite clear that a most inveterate and bloody war was inevitable, and England was then engaged in a struggle for her very existence as a nation. Then, when struggling against all the world, restrictive measures might have been necessary to preserve peace at home; but there was no such excuse at the present moment. What were the statements made at that period? Sir Evan Nepean said—

> "The continuance of this Bill is rendered necessary by the existence of disaffection in Ireland; by the avowed determination of the enemy to invade that country; and the preparations notoriously made for that invasion; by the fact of the collection and association of a number of Irishmen with the forces designed for that purpose; and the actual sitting of a Committee of United Irishmen at Paris, corresponding with the United Irishmen of Ireland, and stimulating them to continue in acts of treason."

Was there any such enemy to deal with now? There were ample reasons then given for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus? The then Chancellor of the Exchequer (Viscount Castlereagh), on that occasion said—

> "Are there no circumstances in which the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act without previous inquiry may not only be necessary, but strictly justifiable? What are the reasons, the strong reasons, at this moment? We are at war with a powerful and active enemy, whose object professedly is to overturn our constitution and liberties. His attention is first turned to Ireland, where his emissaries are perpetually at work. To assist him, those who have fled from their own country are embodied in a kind of regiment. They maintain a correspondence with the disaffected, and have given occasion to the melancholy insurrections we have witnessed. It is not solely on the grounds that there are a number of disaffected; but coupled with the fact that we are now engaged in a war with an enemy who will let slip no opportunity of turning the remains of sedition and treason in Ireland to his own advantage."

That was something like a reason. But, were these hon. Gentlemen who were continually professing themselves such deep admirers and disciples of Mr. Fox, desirous of preserving any character for consistency? Were they now acting according to the principles which he laid down? They were not. He (Mr. J. O'Connell) had prepared a Motion for the present occasion, but on consideration he thought it would be better to turn to the very period alluded to by the right hon. Secretary of State for the Home Department, and to use the very words of the Motion which was supported by Mr. Fox in opposition to Lord Castlereagh in 1805; and he now called upon all those hon. Members who adopted Mr. Fox as their apostle, if he might use the term, to follow the example he had given, and to grant the inquiry which he (Mr. J. O'Connell) now demanded. These were the words used by Mr. Fox in opposition to the Motion of Lord Castlereagh:—

> "Much as I have been alarmed at the opinions of the Ministers of this country for several years, yet I confess I never felt an equal degree of alarm to that which the sentiments just uttered by the

Minister have excited in my mind. I should hope, Sir, that he did not speak seriously. If he did, if he really and deliberately holds such sentiments, I must say that I consider him as maintaining sentiments the most alarming that I have ever heard promulgated in this House, or this country, and such as I could scarcely suppose it possible that any man who imagined the people of England retained any regard for their liberties would venture to declare. The right hon. Gentleman never attempted to go the length he has hazarded to-night; he never before ventured to maintain that because some of the people were bad subjects, the liberty of the whole people should be placed at the discretion of the Minister and his agents, by the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. He always has appeared to me to state insufficient reasons for his rigorous measures, but yet almost any grounds he urged at any time were sufficiency itself compared to those that are laid for the measures now proposed. Unless it be pretended that the measure of justice which is due to the people of Ireland is very different from that which belongs to the people of this country, and that different, nay, contrary, principles of argument are applicable to the two countries, it cannot be said that the English nation enjoys the least security against the suspension of its constitution at the will of any Minister, if this Motion be acceded to on such light grounds, or rather on no grounds whatever. In the whole progress of his hostility to freedom and the constitution of England, never has the Minister uttered anything so dangerous and alarming as to-night. He stated manfully that the character of a man, however pure, is no reason to invest that man with extraordinary powers. This is exactly my opinion; but he adds, that he only alluded to the character of the Lord Lieutenant as an argument against the abuse of the powers. This is to me a very nice and not very intelligible distinction; for the strongest reason in favour of any grant of power is, that it is not liable to abuse. I know there are certain theorists who hold that uncontrollable authority may be safely granted to an able, honest man. I am not one of those theorists. Let the disposition of a man be what it may, I will not consent to invest him with extraordinary unconstitutional powers, for this plain reason, that they are liable to abuse. The virtue of a man is with me no argument in favour of such grants. The history of mankind, the history of the constitution, and my own experience, forbid such grants. If character were a sufficient reason to justify the constituting of such a power, that reason a Minister could always find among the nobility of the country. I will not entrust such power to any man. My objection is to grant the power proposed to the office, not to the man. Even suppose I allow every merit that may be ascribed to the Lord Lieutenant or his Secretary, and those immediately about his government, still my objection to this Bill would not be removed; for I feel it to be one of the greatest mischiefs of arbitrary power that, even though the principals in the administration of it be ever so virtuous, so vigilant, so able, still acts will be committed by some of those to whom in its various ramifications that power will necessarily be delegated, that the principals cannot prevent, and which, if communicated to them, would make them shudder with as much horror as any other persons would be apt to feel. I trust that by rejecting this measure, we shall show to the people that we have their liberty not merely in our mouths, but in our hearts, and that we will not abandon our duty to preserve that sacred trust upon idle rumours or light immaterial whispers."

Such was the language used by Mr. Fox when there was war abroad and the danger of insurrection at home; and now there was only produced by way of reason the half of a letter of a refugee—of a mere newspaper adventurer. The noble Lord at the head of the Government would, of course, back up his representative in Ireland. No doubt he had come down to the House prepared to go the whole length of carrying the measure through. Argument could have no power or weight with him. But he (Mr. J. O'Connell) turned to those independent Members who had themselves some measures of reform in view, and these he entreated to support him. These he entreated not to abandon those Irish Members who had fought in their ranks for every measure of advantage for the people of England. Even though they should be abandoned that night, the Irish Members would never abandon the principles of civil and religious liberty; but he would appeal to the high interests of honour and of principle in the minds of the independent English Members whom he addressed; and if they failed to move, then he should turn to the baser motives and say, If you abandon us now, you may give up your hopes of the reforms you are seeking—you may throw to the winds your plans for reducing taxation and diminishing expenditure, for you will want every soldier you have now in Ireland. This Act alone will breed disaffection; and I tell you you cannot withdraw a single soldier from Ireland. On the contrary, you will have to add to their number. Your revenue will be loaded with additional taxes, instead of your being enabled to reduce those existing. You will, indeed, have the pleasure of once more trampling upon poor Ireland, but you will have to pay for it now—and, perhaps, you will have to pay still more dearly for it hereafter. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving as an Amendment—

> "That a Committee, consisting of twenty-one Members, be formed by ballot, to examine such documents as may be laid before them; and to report to the House their opinion upon these documents, whether the continuance of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act be a measure necessary to the tranquillity of Ireland at the present time."

After a pause MR. MEAGHER seconded the Amendment.

Mr. FEARGUS O'CONNOR said, he did not feel much astonished at the right hon. Baronet the Secretary of State for the Home Department making such a proposition to the House, when he saw so much difficulty on the part of the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. J. O'Connell) in finding a seconder for his resolution. He (Mr. F. O'Connor) had listened with great attention both to the right hon. Baronet and to the hon. Member; and he should say, that the right hon. the Secretary of State brought forcibly to his recollection the story of the lawyer, who said he would much prefer to have a good subservient jury to the best case that ever went before a court. The right hon. Baronet had altogether abandoned his case, and relied entirely upon the subserviency of the House to destroy the last remnant of Irish liberty. He had praised the constabulary force of Ireland, as being so brave and so loyal that they could of themselves put down any attempt at insurrection. But those men were all Roman Catholics, whilst those in power over them were Protestants. The men were taken from the body of the people in Ireland; and what did that prove, but that if the people had employment they would be as loyal and as quiet as any in the world. The right hon. Baronet said, that he was not at liberty at present to say why he asked for the extension of this unconstitutional Act, but that it was to enable the Lord Lieutenant to carry out his policy in Ireland. But the right hon. Baronet had not stated to the House what the nature of that policy was. Why, it was merely a repetition of the old story when they wanted to stop the complaints of the Irish, or to frighten the English people. To-morrow the Chancellor of the Exchequer was going to ask for a vote to relieve Irish distress, but before doing so the present Act should be asked for; and in support of it the right hon. Baronet the Secretary of State for the Home Department could only read a letter published in New York, by an individual whom the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. J. O'Connell) called a refugee, but whom he (Mr. F. O'Connor) called a banished man. And before going further he should observe, that it ill became the hon. Member for Limerick to cast a slur upon those who resisted the very tyranny to which he, and those with whom he acted, were constantly opposed. With reference to the speech of the right hon. Baronet, it appeared to him that he (Sir G. Grey) had adopted all that told for him in the Lord Lieutenant's letter, and, like a well-bred barrister, had rejected all that told against him. But was there ever so vague, so inconclusive, and so impotent an argument, as that which they had heard founded upon this letter? What did the right hon. Baronet say? Why, that Lord Clarendon ought to be the best judge of what practicable agitation meant. It was acting upon this principle, thus shadowed forth, which had led to all the distresses of Ireland. But let the House contrast the policy recommended by the present, with that urged by a former Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. What did the Marquess of Anglesea tell the people of Ireland? What was his advice? Why, "agitate, agitate, agitate." What, on the contrary, was the Earl of Clarendon's motto? Why, he told them to rely upon him—that he himself was the constitution—

> "I am Sir Oracle,
> And when I ope my mouth let no dog bark."

Now, what would be the effect of this policy? He (Mr. O'Connor) would tell them, it would be to make the Earl of Clarendon the head gaoler of Ireland. Yes; every man who urged a view upon any subject contrary to that adopted by Government, would be imprisoned, and his usefulness destroyed. But he told them that they would fail. They would not thus put down agitation, here or elsewhere. Let them look to what was passing around. Whenever terror was to be struck into England, Ireland was made the scapegoat: whenever war was to be waged with opinion in England, Ireland was to be made the battle-field. But, however weak the Irish party might be in this House—however weak the Irish interest might be in the sight of Government, he warned them that they could not go on destroying the constitution of a portion of this country when on the Continent new constitutions were being granted every day—constitutions in harmony with the advancing spirit of the age. There was one thing, however, in which he agreed with the right hon. Baronet the Home Secretary, that it was not to this House or to this Government, but to their own landlords or resident gentry, that the Irish were to look for protection. But what were the facts? The right hon. Baronet knew well that the Irish Gentlemen here would support him in any measure against the liberties of Ireland. Well, let them stop the progress of public opinion, and what were they to expect? Why, clubs and secret associations, and plotting and conspiracy. Were they to give to public opinion its full scope, they would find that what was right and good and sound and wholesome in that public opinion, would absorb and put down what was bad and wrong and dangerous. He wished to ask this question, would Government dare to behave to England as they were behaving to Ireland? Had they forget the letter of Tom Young of the Home Office to General Napier, asking him to take the command of the Brummagem people, in case every other means of agitation were to fail? But the noble Lord sitting there [*pointing to the Treasury benches*] and sitting here [*pointing to the Opposition benches*] is a very different person —as different as night from day. As for himself, he had been taunted with loyalty. But he had to ask, what was the meaning of loyalty? Was the loyalty of a Minister of the Crown, who went down every quarter-day to the Treasury to pocket his salary, the same sort of thing as that which was to be detected in the case of a poor alien, in blood, language, and religion —the victim of grinding middlemen—oppressed by a dominant Church, and tyrannised over by the unconstitutional law of an arbitrary Government? ["Oh!"] Hon. Gentlemen cried "Oh!" Was not Ireland, a Catholic country, subjected to the tyranny of a Protestant Church? He certainly had expected this Session to have heard something in the Royal Speech about the endowment of the Catholic clergy. But the noble Lord at the head of the Government dared not introduce such a measure. The time, however, when a reform in this respect must take place, was possibly not so far off. What Catholicism was in Ireland, the religion of the Jews was in Berlin, and the House knew what had recently happened in Prussia. The House had heard of the necessity of preserving the dignity and authority of the law in Ireland. But how had they showed their strength, and he would add, their impartiality, upon a recent occasion? Why, when two Americans had been incarcerated, they were at once set at liberty upon the demand of the American Minister. Thus, while Irishmen were imprisoned, Americans were allowed to escape. Such had been the weak and vacillating policy of Government; and it was after such displays that they expected loyalty in a starving people. He contended that the conduct of England towards Ireland was as bad as had ever been that of Russia to Poland. Had they ever heard of a million of Poles dying of famine? The time was come, however, when Ministers must reflect upon these things. Forty-nine years ago the Union had been carried; and Mr. Canning, then a great authority, had said, "For the good of Ireland let us carry the Union, and then we will do you justice." For twenty-nine years they had sought for emancipation; for thirty-two years they had struggled for the Reform Bill; and for forty-nine years they had had persecution. Ireland was subjected to the persecution of the Protestant Church, and however they might seek to tranquillise the country, they would never succeed until they had destroyed the ascendancy of that Church. In addition to other grievances in that country, there were partisan judges and packed juries. He recollected, as a case in point, that he had the honour once of being counsel for the Crown at the prosecution of Sir George Bingham, and upon that occasion Judge Moore, who presided, told him that he had made a most ungenerous use of the privilege of the Crown. The criminal sat with the judge, and the judge shook hands with the criminal, fined him sixpence, and took him home to dinner with him in his carriage. These were the things which disgusted the people of Ireland; and the time had now come when Her Majesty's Ministers would be obliged to reflect on the many evils by which that people were afflicted. How came it to pass that, with the most fertile soil, the most genial climate, and the most industrious population in the world, there existed in Ireland more misery, more want, more famine than on any other spot of the whole earth? ["Oh!"] He saw hon. Members sneering—he heard them murmuring and muttering—what did he care for that? Not one farthing. No —he looked to public opinion. He saw them now attempting to resist the financial reformers. But what were they doing in all other countries—what were they doing in Republican France? And here let him not be mistaken, he never was a republican—he never would be a republican—that was, unless he very much altered his mind. But what must be the popular opinion of that form of government, judging of it by the efforts which were seen to flow from it in other countries? The people wished for a reduction in the Army and Navy. They were told that they could not have it because England was a monarchy. ["Oh, oh!"] Yes, could they hold up their monarchy and point to it as effecting the same reforms and reductions which were taking place under the Republic in France, both in the army and the navy of that kingdom? Would they be able much longer to stand against such pressure from without? He was sorry to see the House nearly empty. The Gentlemen of the "stand-stills," the Gentlemen of the "wait-awhiles," and the Gentlemen of the "go-aheads," seemed all to be absent. Nevertheless, he would tell them that their recent free-trade legislation would be the ruin of Ireland. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Ripon laughed. [Sir James Graham: No, no; I differ from you in opinion only.] He was glad, at all events, to see the right hon. Baronet in his place. He supposed that he had been left on duty by his party as a sort of sentinel until they came back again. He would tell him and the House, however, that he (Mr. F. O'Connor) would much prefer the free-trade measures and measures of concession of the late Colleague of the right hon. Baronet, to the free-trade measures and concessions—which were merely bidding for power—of the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) opposite. As for Ireland, she wanted no relief—she only wanted justice. They dealt with any description of property save that which belonged to a landlord. So much for Ministers in office. What had been the policy of Ministers when out of office? They had first encouraged, nay, created revolution in this country, and they now blamed their followers in Ireland.

> "Quum duces faciunt talia, quid non milites faciunt."

Discussion, however, was like the *Hue and Cry*, that announced the thief's approach; and again he reminded the House that the Reform Bill was carried by means of agitation. The late Mr. O'Connell had once called for 500,000 fighting men; and the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. J. O'Connell) had said in 1843, if the reports in the newspapers spoke truly—and a lie never appeared in an English newspaper—"Only delay a little longer, and I will lead you on to death or glory." [Mr. J. O'Connell: No, no!] Then the papers must have told lies. He believed that any difficulty of which the Irish had to complain was traceable to the conduct of their landlords. The old system was to feed the landlords by patronage, to cultivate their estates by patronage. Now the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) was afraid of them—let them go home and cultivate their estates. He (Mr. F. O'Connor) was not a man much attended to by the House—his opinions were not very popular, but the House would remember that he had proposed poor-laws for Ireland in 1834, with a tax upon absentees, with land premiums, farm premiums, and other similar inducements to improved cultivation. He (Mr. F. O'Connor) held that the House must compel Irish landlords to give leases in perpetuity, then they would not have crowds emigrating every day, and taking with them a great deal of the disposable capital of the country. What would be the effect of tenure in perpetuity? A letter had been published the other day from Mr. Charles Colthurst, who managed the estates of his brother, Sir Nicolas Colthurst, in Kerry. This letter related to circumstances as far back as 1818. There was then a large farm upon the estate, from which not more than 600*l.* a year could be realised. Mr. Charles Colthurst undertook to get 1,000*l.* per annum for it if he were allowed to let it in small portions and in continuity. What was the result? Why, they cleared annually 1,350*l.* from the land in question, while there was not a man connected with the locality now who was disaffected to Government. Were they, in the face of facts like these, then, to be told that Government could not interfere in such matters? Were Government not to make regulations between landlord and tenant, when on those regulations depended the tranquillity, the prosperity of the country? But it was hopeless to look to the present Government. They were powerful in opposition—they are powerless in office; and he hoped to see them soon again in the situation which they were destined by nature to fill. Then they would be men who would stand up for economy—men who would drive the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth from office were he to propose another Arms Bill. Such would be the policy of the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) in opposition; but how long would it last after he had crossed to the Ministerial benches? There had been an allusion made by the noble Lord (Lord H. Vane), who moved the Address, to the Chartists. They were told that the Chartists had been put down last April. Now, they had neither been put down then, nor were they put down yet. He had little more to say. Would to God that he had it in his power to stop the progress of the Bill before them! What could be more intolerable, more unjust, and more unconstitutional than that the Secretary of State for the Home Department should come down to the House and tell them that all was tranquil, but that, nevertheless, he entertained certain anticipations of further disturbances, and that in consequence of these anticipations, he asked for an extended limit to the arbitrary powers now in force. What! was Ireland always to be governed by Ministerial anticipations. Let them beware, however, of this fresh attempt to put down public opinion in Ireland. They had lately had many examples that what was called criminality one day might be accounted patriotism the next.

Mr. E. B. ROCHE said, the motto of the Treasury beaches that night seemed to be, *sic volo sic jubeo.* The successors of Fox were now following his example in a remarkably curious manner, for they required a majority of the House to give them a blind and unreasoning support, and it was to be feared that in that expectation they were not reckoning without their host. The only ground upon which the right hon. Baronet (Sir G. Grey) had founded his reasons for proposing the present measure was the letter from Mr. D'Arcy M'Ghee; but he (Mr. Roche) had read that letter, and it struck him that no stronger arguments against the measure had been advanced that night than were contained in the letter in question. Mr. D'Arcy M'Ghee had written with the view of showing why he and his party had failed in their attempt to revolutionise Ireland. He said, "We wanted to raise the people—the people were flocking to our standard in numbers; but a certain party in Ireland interfered, reasoned with the people, and the people fell off." Who was that party? The Roman Catholic clergy; and Mr. D'Arcy M'Ghee fairly admitted that were it not for the Roman Catholic clergy Ireland would have been revolutionised. Now, the Roman Catholic clergy were as powerful at present as they had been in July last. There was no danger that the loyalty of that clergy could be shaken, for that loyalty had been tried for centuries by every species of martyrdom, contumely, and injustice, and they had come out of the fire as pure in loyalty as they had gone into it. Therefore he was of opinion that anything more lame or more vague than the reasons upon which the present application had been founded could not by possibility have been devised. Every interest in Ireland was ruined, and yet the Government came forward with this miserable attempt to suspend the constitutional rights of the people. He was not so great an advocate as others for continued agitation; he was not of opinion that it was right at all times to keep a country in a state of political agitation. When he saw the Whig party on the Treasury bench prepared to vote away the rights of the Irish people, and when he found that the Repeal Association had been swayed as much for the use and benefit of that party—[Mr. J. O'Connell dissented]—as for the use of the Irish people—and there was no doubt it had been of use to them, he confessed he was not so sanguine about the utility of constant agitation. But there were times when all good men ought to unite for the benefit of the country; and certainly at no previous time did Ireland require such an effort to be made as at present. What did the Government now propose with a view to prevent the necessity of agitation? A poor-law which might be said to be shelved for the Session in a Committee upstairs. Then there was a Franchise Bill. The franchise was, no doubt, a political right, but it would not feed a starving people. If long ago the Government had given Ireland equal rights and privileges with England, they would perhaps by this have seen Ireland rising by her own power from her miserable position, and saving England the cost of the horrid famine which had afflicted that part of the empire. But it was not until the eleventh hour that even a franchise was offered. He had heard nothing of the vital question of the tenure; and if it should be brought forward, he supposed it would, like the poor-law, be referred to a Committee. And yet he was scarcely surprised at this when he looked at the constitution of the Cabinet, which did not contain what he considered one true Irishman. As for Lords Lansdowne and Clanricarde, they were absentees; and everybody knew that absenteeism was the curse of Ireland. It had been said sneeringly that at a recent meeting of ten Irish Members there were five different opinions amongst them; but, although it might be laughed at, he would say that one out of the five opinions must be right. ["Hear."] Well, they must have been rather queer fellows, if out of the ten not one of them should have hit upon what was right. He certainly believed, that there was not one of the entire Cabinet who could tell right from wrong upon an Irish question.

Ireland presented every possible difficulty, socially and politically, and to understand her position, it was necessary to serve an apprenticeship to her; and no man in the present Cabinet had had time to do so. Now, he believed, he could point out ample means with which to reform Ireland, without taking one penny from England. All he asked was justice and fair play. He asked them to apply themselves to the Irish question, and view it as men of business ought; and they would then find within Ireland herself, resources enough to prevent the necessity of application to England for relief. Beginning with her mock court, he asked what benefit was the office of Lord Lieutenant to Ireland? He had a great respect for Lord Clarendon; but the use of the Lord Lieutenancy was just in the inverse ratio to the cost, which might be applied to Irish wants. Then there was the Established Church, which would give a very large fund, which fund was, and is, public property; and yet the people of Ireland get no value for it. The Protestants of Ireland were a mere cypher, numerically, and intellectually not a bit better. Why then continue such an establishment, when the Catholic people about it were starving, more particularly as it was matter of history, that the church property in Ireland once belonged to the Catholics, and went not only to the support of religion but of the poor as well: that was a source of Irish revenue, which, if they were practical and prudent men, they would at once apply to the necessities of Ireland. There was also the land tax, amounting to 1,250,000*l.*, which was spent without control or responsibility, and ought to be applied to national purposes. See, next, what the present policy of the Government of the country cost, that might otherwise be saved. They had 50,000 troops in Ireland, rank and file, and a fleet of observation, which might be readily dispensed with, if a system of justice and not coercion were pursued. There was, moreover, maladministration in almost every public office, which, if amended, might create another saving, and out of all together a fund might be had amply sufficient to develop the resources of Ireland, and to prevent any appeal to this country. But why, he asked again, did they continue the old and beaten track of coercion with the experience before them of the evil effects of coercion, as often as it had been tried? Ireland had had the Insurrection Act in force eleven out of the twenty-four years from 1800 to 1825, and within the same period the Habeas Corpus Act had been suspended three times. Looking to the effect of that policy, he must say that, if experience were to guide them, the last thing they ought to have recourse to was coercion. It was said, that Ireland had always been the difficulty of the English Government; and he predicted that she always would be, until a Government, actuated by feelings of humanity, and having the heads of statesmen, could be found to govern on the principle of justice, and not coercion.

MR. W. FAGAN said, it never had been his wish to offer any factious opposition to the present Government, but he regretted, in common with other hon. Members in that House, that the Administration had not shown more activity and energy in carrying out those measures towards Ireland which they had promised whilst occupying the Opposition benches. However, he was willing to believe, that since they came into power there might have been some justification for them in not fulfilling the pledges which they had formerly given. He could not forget what some Members of the present Government had done at various periods for his country; but at the same time he felt it to be his duty to give the proposition which they now brought forward his most strenuous, most energetic, and most continuous opposition. Ever since the time of the Union, it appeared that the policy of the English Government in Ireland was to rule by means of Coercion Acts, and suspensions of the Habeas Corpus Act. But he thought no Government ever came forward to propose such a measure upon such weak grounds as the present. Last year, when they asked for this Act, there was some show of argument for it, for they were told it was to prevent insurrection. That was not the case now. Even the letter from America, upon which so much reliance had been placed, was repudiated by men of all parties in Ireland. He totally denied that there was any such thing as a general disposition towards disaffection in Ireland, as had been alleged. With regard to one insurrection, as it had been called, he could bear his own testimony that it was little more than the riots of a starving population; and the respectable farmers in the neighbourhood frequently remained out for nights in the fields, to avoid being compelled to join the disaffected. When first he heard of the present measure, he thought it was on account of something beyond what they knew in Ireland, or on account of the incendiary fires in the north, perhaps. But it was apparent from the Lord Lieutenant's letter, as well as the speech of the right hon. Baronet (Sir G. Grey), that its real object was the suppression of public opinion in Ireland. He would be glad to know, would hon. Members around him, representing English counties or towns, agree to such a proposal with respect to their own constituencies? They should change their mode of administering the law in Ireland, if they wished to gain the confidence of the Irish people. They should select for their jurors Protestants and Roman Catholics indiscriminately; and he could see nothing to justify their adoption of a contrary mode of proceeding at the late State trials. At the period of Mr. O'Connell's trial there might have been some valid excuse for the exclusion of the Roman Catholics of Ireland from his jury, because nineteen-twentieths of that body had been favourable to the agitation which he conducted; but that excuse did not exist for the recent exclusion of Roman Catholics from juries, because nineteen-twentieths of them were opposed to the late agitation. They should abolish the Church monopoly in Ireland, and until they did so the people of that country would not be satisfied. He knew that the proposed measure was looked upon as a vote of confidence in Lord Clarendon; but although he respected the character and admired the ability of that nobleman, he protested against the doctrine that the liberties of a whole people should be placed at his mercy.

Mr. GRATTAN said, that it appeared to him that this experiment of the Government was somewhat hazardous. He believed, too, that it was an experiment which would fail, as similar experiments had already. There was nothing in the character of the people of Ireland to disqualify them for the enjoyment of liberty—

> "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
> But in ourselves, that we are underlings."

He protested against the doctrine that Ireland should be bound by a legislative union with this country while she was excluded from the practical benefits of the constitution. If he were an Englishman, he should pause before he adopted such a policy. Irishmen were told that they lived under the same laws as Englishmen. Why, then, should there be any difference between them? The difference was not in the law, but in the administration of the law. The error of Irishmen had been that they had not, like their brethren in England, stood out for their liberties. But there was now an opportunity for the friends of Ireland; and he augured well for the favourable termination of this debate from the ominous silence observed by the English Members. Why should the Irish Members be asked unanimously to vote in favour of this measure, when there was not a tittle of proof of its necessity before the House—nothing to recommend it but the solitary letter of his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant? Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Pitt never passed coercive measures and suspensions of the Irish people's liberties upon such light and trivial grounds as this. Each of these statesmen was compelled to come down to the House with bags of letters, and statements, and sworn informations to support the imperious urgency of suspending the constitution; and hon. Gentlemen in those times used to insist upon authentic statements and evidence, given on oath before magistrates, ere they could be induced to accede to the application from the Government of the day. In 1796 and 1797 Mr. Pitt had a Committee of the House, and a Committee was also appointed in Ireland, to inquire into the necessity for unconstitutional measures for maintaining public tranquillity there. In the present instance, however, all the evidence before them was the Lord Lieutenant's letter. He (Mr. Grattan) had every respect for particular individuals selected by the Government for the management of Irish affairs; yet he had over and over again told them that they could never administer the affairs of Ireland so long as they continued to exclude from their counsels men who were best conversant with the affairs of that country. An individual (Lord Stanley) had once declared in that House that the English Government must first make itself feared, before it could be loved; but the true and only effective means for gaining the respect and affection of a people towards their authority, was by dealing out to them even-handed justice, and regarding their rights and liberties as sacred and inviolable—it was not sufficient that the British lion should be strong; he should be merciful. The idea of an insurrection being ready to break out in Ireland again, was preposterous and ridiculous. When it was alluded to last night by a Member of that

House, it was treated with laughter and merriment, and viewed as altogether a burlesque. It was easy for the heated imagination and excited mind of any man to get up such an insurrection in Ireland; and by the aid of the spy system if they would pay him (Mr. Grattan) he would get one up for them in a very little time. The conduct of the Government was in this respect most reprehensible and pernicious; they made it the interest of any man, whether he was an agitator or incendiary in the county of Down, or an insurrectionist in the south of Ireland, to do as much mischief throughout the country as possible. It was a horrid system, and was never surpassed by any thing practised in the palmiest days of tyranny. The Tory party formerly had recourse to the same abominable system; yet he (Mr. Grattan) had the generous confession from the lips of several of that party, that they had been wrong in their policy, but that they had never carried it out to such a pitch as was done at present. He (Mr. Grattan) denounced the manufacture of pikes for the people; but he must also express his indignation of the system which fostered and fattened the spy. They heard something the other night about "mock mediations;" but now it was attempted to work upon the fears of hon. Members by means of "mock insurrections;" and at length they end by leaving the Irish people only a mock constitution. It was not likely the people would become enamoured of British connexion, when its principal fruits were the suspension of their rights and the denial of their liberties. Indeed, the object of the Government seemed to be to push the experiment to its utmost limits, and try how far the Irish spirit could bear the abstraction of its rights; they appeared to be intent upon bringing the Irish people down to the most infinitesimal quantity of the constitution they could endure; but this was not the way to cement the Union, or to prove its advantages to be equality and reciprocal benefits. This was not the way to silence the repeal agitation, but rather the most effective means to widen the breach, and provoke the demand for total separation. They had been told the Irish people felt no penitence for their past disaffection and rebellion. The people of Ireland not penitent! Why, they had nothing to repent of, they had never joined in any rebellion—it was an insult, a mockery, and a falsification of the facts to tell this House that the people of Ireland, the laity or clergy, Protestants, or Catholics, had sympathised with or countenanced any insurrectionary movement. It was a foul calumny heaped upon that nation to mix them up with the acts of a few violent and misguided young men whose proceedings had been generally repudiated and denounced by all parties. And even at the recent trials at Clonmel it was a puzzle to the lawyers to find out overt acts against the parties accused—they were obliged to rake up letters written in March, April, May, and June, to make out the charge. Mr. O'Brien distinctly denied all participation in the acts of the more violent party; he separated from it, denounced it, and repudiated Mr. Mitchel's conduct. Mr. O'Brien was charged with going to France to solicit French aid for the disaffected in Ireland; but M. Lamartine's written answer gives a direct denial to the accusation. Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Meagher did no more than what the people of England had done, namely, congratulate the French nation on the acquisition of their liberties. Ireland did not require any such unconstitutional measures; it could be infinitely better governed without than with them, for such measures could never conciliate the hearts or secure the affections of the people; it must infallibly tend further to alienate both from British rule and from the British people. Would a suspension of their liberties excite their love for England? and what charm for a people was there in coercion? Why should the Irish people love the English more than the French nation? The French were as well-mannered and agreeable persons as the English. [An Hon. MEMBER: And better-looking.] His hon. Friend added "better-looking," but he (Mr. Grattan) did not think so; there was something open and honest about an Englishman's looks that could not so easily be discovered in the moustachioed visage of a Frenchman. The Lord Lieutenant complained that there was no improved feeling in Ireland as regarded respect for the law. Now it happened that an individual who had been in gaol for seven months was going to be tried this day. Several trials had been attempted in this case, and had failed; indictment after indictment was preferred—at one time in the city of Dublin, then in the county, then back again to the city. Such proceedings could not surely increase the respect for the law—he must tell the

Attorney General that although he (Mr. Grattan) might admit that he was a talented lawyer, he failed in all his endeavours to get a conviction because he had been insane enough to have recourse to a system of selecting or rather of packing juries. In Mr. Duffy's case, 177 jurors were on the panel, 42 of whom only were Catholics; among the first 13 there was no Catholic, among the last nine there were six. Two of the Catholics had died four months before; three others had been challenged by the Crown on a previous occasion; and others, when called, were found to have absconded and left Dublin some time ago. Four others were tradesmen; two were public contractors; one was a shoemaker; another hairdresser to the Lord Lieutenant. That was a specimen of how juries were selected in Ireland; and was it to be supposed that these practices could inspire the Irish people with a love and reverence for the sanctity and majesty of the law? Let the House mark further how these jurymen were selected. The documents before him showed one to be chandler to the Chief Secretary; another, purveyor to the Lord Lieutenant; another, engineer to a Government commission; another, was formerly seedsman to the Lord Lieutenant; two were Government sinecurists; another was auctioneer to the Woods and Forests; another, consul to the King of Hanover; and so he might go on enumerating a long list selected from middle-class tradesmen, who must, from various reasons, be supposed to be more or less under the influence of high quarters. Let them not sanction a repetition of the practices resorted to in Lord Castlereagh's time—arresting individuals, throwing them into prison—destroying their character, and reducing them to poverty, without a particle of evidence to sustain any proof of guilt against them, as the published letters in Lord Londonderry's Memoirs so fully testify. For his own part, he had rather see martial law established at once in Ireland, than see her governed on such a system, and treated with such infinitesimal doses of the British constitution. Was this a time to add to the oppressions of Ireland, when her farmers were flying from the country, the best of her population emigrating—her lands going out of cultivation, and the sufferings of her people were such that he could draw tears from their eyes by recounting them? The Irish people were the equals of the English in every respect. They knew how to die nobly as well as the English. They were ready to fall by their side on the field of honour; let them not now be condemned to perish with disgrace.

Mr. ANSTEY said, that he could not concur either in the Motion of the right hon. Baronet the Secretary of State for the Home Department, or in the Amendment moved by the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. J. O'Connell). It would be necessary, in the first instance, to state the reason why he would deny to those charged with the executive power those means which, in their judgment, they deemed necessary for the preservation of the public peace. He would acquit the right hon. Baronet (Sir G. Grey) of the imputation cast upon him of concealment and management in the conduct of his case. The grounds on which the measure rested had been laid before them fairly, and without reservation, and neither the right hon. Baronet nor the Lord Lieutenant were liable to the accusation of affecting an air of mystery, or leading the House to suppose that they were in possession of information which it would not be wise to communicate. The common law, the permanent statute law, and the occasional legislation of Parliament, had conferred on the Government powers quite sufficient in ordinary and even in extraordinary times for its conduct. But if these powers were not sufficient, it lay on the Government to show the necessity of the additional powers which they asked for, more especially when the powers they requested concerned the personal liberty of the subject. This had been effected in times of great excitement, by the suspension of the Act of Habeas Corpus. He admitted that the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act now asked for was of a mitigated nature compared with the suspensions which took place at various periods during the reign of George III. But still it was a direct encroachment on the personal liberty of the subject, and it was necessary for the proposers to make out a strong case to justify it. Let the House pause for a moment, and consider what the evidence was on which it was contended this measure was necessary. That evidence was contained, first, in the fact that there had been last year an insurrection in Ireland, and that it was put down; secondly, in a letter supposed to have been written by one of the refugees who fled from justice in consequence of the part he had taken in that insurrection, and which letter was published in America; and, thirdly, in a letter read by the right hon. Baronet from the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and which was laid before the House by Her Majesty. With regard to the first ground, the answer was that it did not exist, for the insurrection was put down. But it was said that a spirit of disaffection existed. If that was a justification, it existed equally in this country. Had they, he asked, no disaffection in England? Was not Chartism as rampant in this year as it was in the last? They had that night had authority for believing that the Chartism of 1849 would be as dangerous to the State as the Chartism of 1848. Did not the Chartists of 1848 meditate rebellion, commit overt acts of high treason, gather arms, and hold those infernal conclaves for the assassination of magistrates and the police, to which their attention had been so lately called? Therefore, the charge of disaffection might be levelled against the lower classes in this country with as much truth as against the inhabitants of the disturbed districts in the county of Tipperary. But the lower classes were not the only disloyal English. He would remind the House that an hon. Gentleman, filling the high position of a Member of their body, had been going about exciting the masses of Lancashire, and asking them to league with him in an enterprise the avowed object of which was to deprive the Throne of its mighty colonial empire. What were they to think of those who, on the ground of economy, presented to the excited populace of Great Britain the example of the Republic of America, and through the mouth of the hon. Member had declared that if monarchy was inconsistent with economy, they must have economy *ruat cœlum?* He objected, then, to the selection of Ireland for the application of this law, and complained of its injustice. If it were well to prosecute Mr. Kevin Doherty, they could not justify the impunity conceded to the hon. Member for the West Riding. What was there in the circumstances of Ireland different from those of Great Britain to justify this legislation? They had the Gentlemen of the Manchester school, in the present Session, swelling the majority for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and yet they found them wasting the time of the House with idle rant in the course of last Session, on the subject of that mitigation of the law of treason which they were pleased to denounce as arbitrary and unconstitutional. What was the conduct of those Gentlemen who belonged to the great party of reform, and who were forsooth liberals and friends to the extension of knowledge amongst the people? They were opposing the measures they ought to support, and supporting the measures which they ought to oppose, if they were true to their principles. Why was this? Because last Session it was the case of Great Britain, and now the case of Ireland? He should next make a few observations with respect to the second ground that had been brought forward in support of the proposition of the right hon. Baronet, namely, the letter of Mr. D'Arcy M'Ghee. He was acquainted with Mr. M'Ghee, and could give the House some information about him. What would the House say when he assured them—an assurance he would not give were not the preservation of life involved—for on the supposed accuracy of the statement of Mr. M'Ghee might depend that tremendous question if the writs of error taken by the gentlemen in prison in Dublin were decided against them—that Mr. M'Ghee, to his (Mr. Anstey's) knowledge, at his instance, and mainly through his persuasion, was, down to the end of February last, engaged most honestly and zealously in an attempt to prevent the appearance of revolutionary, or even liberal, principles among the young men constituting the Young Ireland party in the repeal ranks? He had a letter in his possession written by Mr. M'Ghee, in such a spirit of loyalty and conservatism as it would not be possible for any gentleman to compose, in a spirit of conservatism or loyalty—nay, he would go further, on the principles of the old Tory school—a more extreme epistle. In that strain of mind was Mr. M'Ghee until the end of February, when the fatal news of the revolution in France reached Ireland; and what was done afterwards was done under the effect of that absorbing excitement which it produced. He (Mr. Anstey) would not pay any attention to the letter which Mr. M'Ghee had written from America. He was a poet, and a good poet, but still a poet; otherwise he would have paused before writing such a foolish and, apparently, such an ungenerous letter, for it might be very injurious to his former associates. He did not think there was anything in the third ground — the letter of his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland — to justify this measure. Nothing but necessity could justify it, and that necessity did not exist. What did Lord Clarendon say in asking for a renewal of these powers? Notwithstanding the passing of the Act with so much unanimity last Session, and notwithstanding the flagrant insurrection which was raging at the time when it passed, Lord Clarendon declared that he had not found it necessary to arrest any person under the provisions of the Act, "except on sworn informations." In other words, so far as its letter was concerned, the Act was dead. Lord Clarendon said, that whatever good effect had been produced by it, was attributable to the prevalent conviction of the unanimity of Parliament in passing it. That conviction would not be lessened if the Bill were not renewed. Not only had not Lord Clarendon used the powers entrusted to him, but Her Majesty's Ministers had been enabled, considering the general aspect of public affairs, to advise Her Majesty to make large reductions in the military estimates of last year. Nothing but necessity could justify the renewal of the Act, and in that recommendation they had the assurance of the Government that no necessity existed. Could anything be more dangerous than to accustom the Irish people to this occasional legislation? What was it but to teach them to go on deluding themselves with the vain thought which it was so desirable to remove from their minds, that their safety lay, not in self-reliance, but in an abject dependence on that House and on Her Majesty's Ministers? These were the reasons which induced him to give his vote against the Bill, and for the same reasons he would give his vote against the proposition for a Committee of Inquiry. It presupposed that there was further evidence reserved to themselves by Her Majesty's Ministers, and which they might be compelled to produce before the Committee; and they had already the statements of the right hon. Baronet the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and of his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, that there was no other evidence except that which was a matter of notoriety, and which had been communicated to the House. He would not give his vote for the Amendment, but he was not the less resolved to give his vote against the Bill. He should on future occasions abstain from addressing the House on the principle of the measure; but when the Bill went into Committee, he should propose an Amendment that would, to some extent, mitigate the objections he had to it. In taking this course of opposition, he believed that he was doing that to which both Houses had been recently invited; and that, in the gracious words which they had heard from the Throne—and a more fitting conclusion he could not give to his observations—he was now aiding Her Majesty to uphold the fabric of the constitution, which is founded upon the principles of freedom and justice.

Mr. BOURKE regretted that, on rising to address the House for the first time, he should feel himself compelled to speak on a subject that must be equally painful to the feelings of all true Irishmen. But representing, as he did, a county that was little, if at all, implicated in the melancholy circumstances of the last summer, he felt it to be his duty, on the part of his constituents, as well as on his own, to express his painful conviction that there did exist a necessity for the continued suspension of this Act. From the statement he had heard that night from the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department, as also from his own knowledge of the feelings of parties and men in Ireland, he felt convinced that the Government were justified in the course they had taken. If this were a measure that was calculated to excite feelings of alarm in the minds of men—if it were a measure that would impress on the minds of men the conviction that a blow was still intended by the rebellious section in Ireland against the Government—if it were a measure that was calculated to cramp the transactions of commerce, or retard the operations of agriculture—if he thought there was an intention on the part of the Government to make this measure in any degree permanent, he should, though deeply impressed with its necessity, feel himself bound to oppose it. He felt, however, that the contrary was the case, and that the powers sought by this Bill were necessary in order to prevent the recurrence of those events which had been so detrimental to the interests of Ireland during the last year. Seeing, then, that there was no intention on the part of Her Majesty's Government to render this a permanent measure, and seeing also that it was not likely to produce any of those effects which had been anticipated, he thought that all who were desirous of seeing peace and order established in the country should give their support to the proposal for a limited extension of the measure. He (Mr. Bourke), as an Irishman, would most gladly give his support to any measure which would insure, even for a short time, a continuance of peace. What Ireland wanted was, that her children might be allowed to turn their minds, even for a short time, from the contemplation of political theories to the cultivation of the soil, and the development of the resources of the country. The people of Ireland had been accustomed for many years to think more of fighting than of farming, and more of contention than of commerce. It was in consequence of this that they were prevented from taking those steps which other people might have taken in order to defend themselves from the dangers of the famine which had afflicted the country for the last few years. A terrible calamity had overtaken the Irish people, unprecedented in the history of nations, and it found them unprepared, and without any means of defence to shield them from its onslaughts. No person who looked back to the history of the last few years, since the commencement of the famine, could fail to see that there was also another feature in that distress which it was now terrible to contemplate. A spirit was abroad among the people which rendered even famine more hideous than it would otherwise have been. A spirit was abroad which enabled designing men to tell the famine-stricken peasants, that the cause of the deaths of those nearest and dearest to them was not the visitation of Providence. but the effect of bad legislation. The Irish peasant was accustomed to hear that the Irish people lost by the connexion with England—that their country was ruined by it—that the Saxon sway had ever been hostile to Celtic improvement and to Celtic prosperity. It was a maniac, an anarchical, and a traitorous spirit that was abroad among the people. Did this spirit now exist in the country? That was the question which they were to decide to-night. Did the spirit now exist in the country which made the Government declare, last year, that the presence of 40,000 men was absolutely necessary in order to keep it in order and quell it? If any portion of that spirit was still in existence, then there was a necessity for the adoption of more stringent measures than those that were usually in force in the country. It had been said that this measure was brought forward for the purpose of putting down the repeal agitation. Lord Clarendon had been possessed of the power, under the Act, now for nearly six months, and was there a single particle of evidence to show that that power had been so employed? Not a single man had been arrested but what was deeply interested in the traitorous agitation of 1848. There had not been a single instance of any person having been arrested under this Act merely because he held repeal opinions. No Government should attempt to put such a power in force except for the actual suppression of rebellion. The opposition which had arisen to the measure, he confessed, did not appear to him strange. He was not an old man; but still he was old enough to remember the time when those unfortunate men now in prison, whose lives were forfeited to the just sentence of the law, were burning and shining lights in that Association which had for many years held sway over the passions of the Irish people. He recollected when members of the Loyal National Repeal Association were not ashamed to avail themselves of the *prestige* and traditionary influence of one who bore the ancient name of O'Brien, and were not ashamed to welcome to their councils and to avail themselves of the talents and energy of a Meagher. The fact was, that many of the leaders of the late Confederation owned allegiance to the leaders of the Repeal Association. Where were now the leaders? They were still legislators, but their followers were convicted felons. The masters were Members of Parliament, but the pupils sit in the dreary cells of a Dublin gaol. He might pursue the subject further, and show the intimate connexion that existed between those hon. Members and the unfortunate men now suffering the penalty of their crimes. [Mr. J. O'CONNELL: No, no!] He was prepared to prove his statement; but he would not pursue the subject any farther. He would only remind the House of a fact of which, no doubt, they were all aware—that Conciliation Hall begat the Confederation, and the Confederation begat those miserable scenes of the last year. He deeply regretted that it should have fallen to his lot to be compelled to give his support to this measure, and most sincerely did he hope that this might be the last time that they should ever see the Government called upon to ask for a retrenchment—for a retrenchment it undoubtedly was—of the liberties of the people of Ireland.

Sir H. W. BARRON said, he had recently left that part of Ireland which was considered to be most imbued with an insurrectionary feeling in the summer of last year, and he could affirm, upon his honour, that he never knew the country to be in so tranquil a state as at present; that he never knew political discussion to be so completely at a discount; that he never knew the leaders of that violent party in Ireland, whom he had always opposed, to be so completely prostrate. In the sixteen years during which he had been a Member of that House he had never previously witnessed so little agitation in Ireland. He could not point out a single individual in that country who was even attempting to produce anything like a dangerous or insurrectionary feeling; while the humblest peasant in his neighbourhood, who was imbued with any bad feelings last summer, was now completely convinced of the folly, the weakness, and the wickedness of the men who had led him into insurrection by means of the ideal benefits which they had promised to the country. From the bishop to the humblest curate of the Roman Catholic religion, in that part of the south of Ireland with which he was more intimately connected, there was not one to be found to lend his sanction to anything of an insurrectionary nature. Even the few younger clergy, who were imbued last summer with something of feelings approaching to an insurrectionary character, were perfectly cured, and convinced they were wrong in the views they then took. They were so completely changed that there was not one man among ten of them (if, indeed, there were ten who held those opinions, and to his knowledge there were not), to whom he could point his finger as entertaining any such feelings at the present time. [*Laughter.*] He should be glad to know what amused hon. Gentlemen. He believed these men were convinced that the insurrectionary movement of last year had inflicted vast injury on the country—and that, impressed with this feeling, they would strenuously resist any tendency to renew that movement in whatever quarter. He therefore, on his part, felt it to be his duty to oppose the demand of the Government for unconstitutional powers, no longer necessitated by the circumstances of the case. When it was considered necessary, last year, to give the Government more power, he did not object to do so; but he believed that it was not necessary for the vindication of the law to supend the liberties of the people; and he felt it, therefore, to be his duty to vote against the measure. He had no mistrust of Lord Clarendon in carrying out the measure; on the contrary, he believed that he administered the law with justice, prudence, and mercy, and also with the highest sense of feeling and honour. But although he had every confidence in Lord Clarendon, still he could not consent to surrender that which in this country was considered the noblest birthright of the subject—his liberty. Ireland had been long enough treated as a slave instead of as a sister; and unless some attempt were made by the Government of this country to raise her up from her present position, they might depend upon it that she would drag this country down to an abyss which was not yet perceived. Coercion Bills were always employed as the remedies for the difficulties of Ireland—remedial measures were seldom or ever attempted. He protested against the adherence, on the part of England to the old system of tyranny over Ireland, merely on the ground of the ravings of some fanatic here, or some transatlantic lunatic, whom the hon. Member for Youghal had accurately characterised as a poet. It would seem as though the Government were even yet ignorant of the awful condition of Ireland and her people. The poor-law imposed upon Ireland, had proved itself utterly unable to meet the exigencies of the case: the men of property were ruined by it, the farmers were compelled to throw up their farms, and labourers were reduced to the verge of wretchedness and misery. There never was an Act which was so universally opposed in Ireland as that measure, and never was there a method of getting rid of a difficulty so generally execrated as referring the matter to a Committee upstairs, because it was considered to be a mere evasion of the question. The Irish people wanted food, and the means of subsistence, and they had asked him (Sir H. Barron) over and over again, what the British Parliament was going to do for the country. He now asked the same question; and the reply was the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. Would that either feed the people or stimulate industry? What, he would ask, had been done with the arterial drainage of the country? Thousands of persons had been turned away from these works, which had nearly been stopped altogether, and the consequence was, that a large addition had been made to the numbers who were without food or employment. These were the advantages which Ireland gained from its union with England, that rich and powerful country. As a necessary result, thousands of persons, who had shown themselves in the worst of times the advocates of British connexion, were driven into the arms of the repealers, on the ground that their interests were totally neglected by the British Parliament. He did not apprehend any enormous mischief from the Act, when its powers were placed in the hands of such a man as Lord Clarendon, but he objected to it on principle, and because no necessity had been made out to justify its passing into a law.

Mr. MOORE said, that having duly weighed the case put forward by the noble Lord at the head of the Government, he wholly failed to perceive in it any justification of the demand now made upon the House. He would tell the Lord Lieutenant to his face that he first made the giants, and then he slew them. There was a saying that if rats once got into a house, they were never to be got out again. If the viceregal rat-catching mania were to be indulged, Ireland would never again be free from coercion. The Lord Lieutenant had implicated the whole of the people of Ireland in his charge of disloyalty and treason. The noble Earl's statement respecting the disaffection that reigned there, so far from being exaggerated, was underrated. But he (Mr. Moore) must assert that there were only a few disloyal persons, whilst nine-tenths of the people of Ireland were disaffected to the Government of the country, and dissatisfied with the treatment they experienced. During the last year the case was totally different from what it now was, for then an insurrection was inevitable; but no rebellion actually broke out, as the people of Ireland had no intention to rebel. Although the *Felon* and the *United Irishman* talked as if a million of men were ready to rise at the stamp of their foot, they had scarcely more influence with any portion of the Irish people than any mere Saxon in this country. They were not known to and not trusted by the people; and they were, in fact, opposed from first to last by those in whom the people of Ireland did believe and trust. There was no fear of a rebellion now. But what did Lord Clarendon say in support of his renewed request to continue the suspension of Irish liberty?

"This country," said the Lord Lieutenant, "has been too long trained to a system of agitation to be at once weaned from such a course."

What, then, were the objects which the noble Earl proposed to attain by prolonging the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act?

"To secure for Ireland that continued repose which is so vitally essential to her prosperity—to protect the country from the renewal of an agitation for objects that cannot be attained, and which for many years has disturbed its tranquillity, scaring away capital, destroying confidence, and rendering impossible the steady application of industry."

It was impossible, indeed, to speak too highly in praise of the temper and discretion with which the powers entrusted to Lord Clarendon were exercised by him; but he did not like leaving the lives and liberties of his countrymen at the discretion of an individual. There was a good deal of chance in these matters, and they might have a Lord Lieutenant on whose discretion no reliance could be placed. He thought he could take credit to himself for having opposed that agitation as long, as efficiently, as Her Majesty's Government had done. He had for years consented rather to remain in a private station of life than to join the agitation, whilst Her Majesty's Ministers sat on the Treasury benches dispensing their patronage to the agitators. The present Government had been sheltered under the wing of one set of agitators in the same manner that they were about to place themselves under the protection of another similar movement. In his opinion there could be nothing more vile or profligate than the abandonment of former principles, or the infliction of punishment upon those who had been the associates and coadjutors of the present Ministry; and feeling that the Government had so acted, he should oppose the extension of the Coercion Act to any longer period by every means in his power.

Mr. MUNTZ felt it to be impossible to give his support to the Government on the present occasion, and he regretted it. He was always anxious to give Ministers his vote when he could honestly do so. But if the same circumstances which they had represented to exist in Ireland had taken place in England, he would not consent to vote for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. There were circumstances that might justify such an extreme measure; but since last year they were so much altered, even according to the statement of the right hon. Baronet the Secretary for the Home Department, that there could be no justification now for resorting to such a proceeding. There had always been a system of coercion practised in Ireland. He looked in vain for measures which should prevent the necessity for coercion. No one knew better than himself the value of a coercive power; but the constant exercise of such a means of government never could produce good conduct in a nation so ruled. Let some measure be adopted which would lead the Irish people to believe that they were to be well governed; and then, if they did not conduct themselves with loyalty and peacefulness, he would consent to do as he had done last year, namely, grant all the powers that were necessary for their coercion. He entertained great respect for the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; but let him ask the House, when the noble Lord talked of political agitation, where the present occupants of the benches below him would have been but for political agitation? Where would the free-traders have been, where would have been the liberties of the country, if it had not been for political agitation? Not one single improvement would ever have been obtained from any Executive Government without the same principles of right, just, and honest agitation. Every man had a right to agitate, if he did it in an honest manner. On these grounds he should oppose continuing such powers in the Government of Ireland.

Lord J. RUSSELL: Sir, it is very easy to follow the course of the hon. Gentleman who spoke last but one, and when the immediate urgency of the danger is past to laugh at the risk, and when the security is obtained to make light of the precautions by which that security was gained. Sir, I admit at once that the case which we have to lay before the House at this time is not similar to that which we had to announce last year, when insurrection appeared to be impending, and when the urgency was so great that this House almost unanimously passed in a single day a measure of such vital importance—I will say so hostile to the general liberties of the country—as that which is now under consideration. But, Sir, when the hon. Baronet the Member for Waterford (Sir H. W. Barron) gave his reasons against the measure, I own that they appeared to me to be reasons which my right hon. Friend (Sir G. Grey) might very well have urged in his opening speech. The hon. Gentleman says that Waterford was in a state of the utmost alarm: it was expected that a rebellion would immediately break out; nobody felt secure. This measure was passed, and now we find Waterford and the country around more tranquil than it has been for many years. All alarm has subsided, confidence has taken the place of panic, and men feel that they are no longer living under apprehensions of outbreak and rebellion. Really I should have thought that that was as great a panegyric as could well be passed on the effects of the measure we propose. But the hon. Gentleman gives further reasons; and says he must say likewise that the Act has been administered with great leniency; that nothing could be more judicious or merciful than the conduct of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in administering the great powers committed to him. If then here is an Act which has not only produced the most beneficial effects, but has been so administered that no fault is to be found with the authority to whom that administration was confided, I say that this is a case for continuing, at least for some time longer, the beneficial operations of that Act, for entrusting it to the same administration, and for taking care not too soon to remove the bandage lest the wound should bleed afresh, in consequence of which you found it necessary in the first instance to take your precations. Sir, the hon. Gentleman who spoke early in this debate, laid very great stress upon one particular paragraph in the Lord Lieutenant's letter, and then endeavoured to infer from that paragraph that it was on account of the agitation, and because it was for an unattainable object, that the suspension of the Habeas Corpus was not proposed. Now, I take it, although there was some plausibility in that statement, that it took its whole force from the fact of separating that paragraph from the general tenor of the letter, of removing it from the context, and then not placing before the eyes of the House the whole case which the Lord Lieutenant had desired to represent. It would not, I admit, be any ground for a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, that that agitation was growing, and that that agitation was for an unattainable object; but, Sir, when we find that that agitation, after continuing for many years, and displaying in its course a singular mixture of vehemence and of patience—of disappointments and revivals, and that that course could only be continued, as I believe, by the influence and talent of one man—when we find that that course of agitation has at length led to what might have been expected to have taken place some time before, namely, the separation and division of those who agitated for that object, into two parties—the one still clinging to a hope that by a continued and organised agitation they might at length attain their object—the other party declaring that it was useless to expect anything from discussion; that the time had arrived when they must take measures to prepare and organise rebellion, and to attempt to wrest by physical force that which they had failed in obtaining by petition, by discussion and by agitation—then, Sir, I say that the paragraph of the Lord Lieutenant bears a more significant sense, and is well worthy of being taken into consideration by this House. Such, Sir, has been in effect the course of events. There was a separation—the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. J. O'Connell) speaks of it himself—there was a separation between those who said that there was still a hope of that which I maintain is an unattainable object (in which I quite agree with the Lord Lieutenant), who still said that they would continue their organised agitation for that purpose, and between that other party which began in the most open way—in a way I believe to which there is no parallel in the history of the world, declaring that their object was treason—that what they wished was to drive the Lord Lieutenant from the Castle of Dublin—to plant the repeal flag upon its battlements—to kill or to seduce Her Majesty's troops—to drive every authority placed there by the Queen from the soil of Ireland—to place a provisional Government in the place of the legal Government then existing—and to inflict a blow upon what one of them was pleased to call "the accursed British Empire." Such was the language used, such was the language declared, such was the language published, and newspapers containing such language — containing such open avowals of treasonable designs were read, as I have been told by Irishmen living in Ireland, having no official authority or official influence there, but merely residing there — were read with avidity by the peasants and tradesmen in the country and in the towns through a great portion of Ireland. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Limerick (Mr. J. O'Connell) and others say that there was not such a course of prosecution taken by the Lord Lieutenant as could have put a stop to that evil in its commencement. Now I totally deny that that is the case. As soon as the Lord Lieutenant could obtain from the law officers an opinion that there would be any chance of a successful prosecution, he directed such articles to be prosecuted. Those who remember the events of last year, may recollect that in some instances those prosecutions were successful, whilst in several others they were defeated; and I may say that, in those cases in which we were defeated, any man in this country, reading the paragraphs that were prosecuted, would have said that sedition was the mildest word that could be used with respect to their character. With this the evil became more dangerous—the effect of baffled prosecutions was to give increased power to those who were endeavouring to effect their purpose by rebellion. Clubs were formed. Those clubs were directed to procure arms. About 7,000 members were enrolled in Dublin alone. That system of clubs spread with marvellous rapidity. In almost every town there was a combination under some name or other, which had the same object in view. Precautions were thought necessary. The hon. Member who spoke last but one said that the Lord Lieutenant first created giants and then slew them. All I can say is that persons used to war—persons who had shown their knowledge of war in the field—did not think it beneath them to take very great precautions lest an outbreak in Dublin or elsewhere should cause a surprise and the sudden loss of blood. Such was the case when this House thought it necessary, on the demand of the Government for fresh power, to pass the Bill for the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. But though that Act was most effectual—though the insurrection was very quickly suppressed—we are not to conclude from that that if no precautions had been taken, and if those preparations for rebellion had been allowed to go on until after the harvest, there would not have been a sanguinary outbreak in Ireland, and a contest in which no doubt the Queen's troops and the loyal subjects of Her Majesty would have been successful, but their success would have been attended with calamities which every Member of this House would have deeply deplored. Then, if such has been the case, if—so far from being a mock rebellion, so far from there having been no danger—there was considerable danger—a danger, too, only averted by extraordinary measures — I do say, pause for a time before you deprive the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland of the means of preventing the commencement of similar movements for a similar purpose, and having a similar object in view. Sir, the hon. Baronet the Member for Waterford spoke with respect to other matters; and, like many Members coming from his country, I think he confounded things which are within the powers of Parliament—matters for which we may be justly reproached or justly criticised—matters over which we have no control whatever. He said that there was great discontent in Ireland, and that the discontent was caused by the present state of the poverty and distress which existed in the country. Now, with respect to that distress, there are two circumstances most apparent. There is one, which is the infliction of the loss of the staple food of the country, beyond the power of man to avoid—the other is the choice of the particular food as the staple food of the people, and that it is in the power of man to prevent. It is a food which every one knows is of so cheap and low a nature, that those who are deprived of it cannot look to any cheaper food in its default—it is a kind of food which will not keep beyond the succeeding harvest, like corn of different kinds; therefore, the deficiency of one year cannot be supplied by the abundance of the next—it is a kind of food also which is liable to diseases which very often sweep away the greater portion of the whole crop. Now, last year in Ireland, after repeated losses, after the losses of 1845 and 1846, there was, I will not say an unnatural—after so long a dependence upon it—but there was, as I have heard from all kinds of evidence, a desire, and almost a passion, on the part of the people to recover that food; and there was no article of furniture, no little means of comfort, remaining which the peasantry were not ready to part with in the hope of obtaining a renewal of that food on the abundance of which they and their children had so long subsisted. That course was, perhaps, natural, but it certainly has been most fatal. The failure of that food again, in the last year, has been as great as in any year that has passed. Those who had given their all, and spent their all, in the hope of obtaining that abundant supply on which their families were to feed for the whole year, have been again disappointed, and remain helpless and almost hopeless in the land. These are causes for sad lamentation—causes for lamentation that they should have placed their reliance so entirely on the hope of a successful production of the potato for food — a cause for lamentation that it should please Providence so utterly to defeat and disappoint that expectation. These are matters for regret, for reflection—perhaps, for humility; perhaps, for precautions against similar reliance in future; but they afford no reason for coming down to this House, and saying that the British Parliament and the Act of Union have been the causes of a calamity which no man could foresee or prevent. [Sir H. W. BARRON here expressed dissent.] I so understood the hon. Gentleman; but if he did not mean to produce that effect, his language ought to have been made much clearer; and I hope that another time when he introduces the subject, he will take care to make the distinction more evident than he has done on the present occasion. Let us be reproached if you will for our ignorance of Ireland; reproach us if you will for passing so many Acts of restriction on the liberties of the people; but let us not be reproached for that for which we are not accountable. The British Parliament found, at the time of the Union, the people of Ireland living upon this staple food; and they have continued to live upon it up to this time, and with increased numbers. It was not the act of the British Parliament that they should be dependent on this food; and therefore let us not be reproached with this calamity. If we can assuage that calamity, if any English or Irish Member will point out to the Parliament the mode by which the calamity can be assuaged and the distress relieved, there will be every disposition, if that remedy or alleviation is thought effectual, to adopt it, and to act, not in the spirit in which we are accused of acting, of doing that which is hostile to the Irish people; but with the unanimous wish, although not the original cause of the calamity, to do all in our power to alleviate its pressure, and ameliorate its effects. Having said thus much with respect to the Bill now before the House, and with respect to charges sometimes made, I shall not enter upon the subject of other measures with respect to which some Gentlemen have questioned me. When those measures are before the House, I shall be ready to take part in the discussion regarding them. I will only say at present, that we think it our duty to Ireland itself, and to this country also, that we should arm the Lord Lieutenant with powers to prevent the renewal of an agitation directly leading to rebellion and insurrection—that we believe, that if on the 1st of March this Act were allowed to expire, many of the same persons who have endeavoured to turn the distress of Ireland to their own purposes would again be active; and I should have some fear that they would again have a partial success, no doubt to be again defeated. But if this House wishes to preserve peace and tranquillity in Ireland—if this House wishes that there should be time for any measures of legislation to operate beneficially—if this House wishes to act in the manner most useful to the people of Ireland, who have been misled by this species of agitation, then they will consent to the introduction of this Bill, and consent to the renewal of those powers which it is intended to confer.

MR. G. THOMPSON said, that he must repudiate the imputation cast upon certain Gentlemen for their votes on a former occasion. He believed they were influenced by the same feelings that influenced him on that occasion, viz., that it was neither expedient nor necessary on that occasion to divide against the Government, inasmuch as they had information they should almost immediately afterwards be called upon to discuss the merits of the particular measure then referred to. He had paid the utmost attention to the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell), in the hope that he would justify Members of the House in voting for the measure; but he confessed that if the defence of this measure which was set up by the Secretary of State for the Home Department was weak, the defence set up by the noble Lord at the head of the Government was still weaker. When the noble Lord introduced the measure six months ago, he assigned distinct and intelligible reasons for so doing: he informed the House that he considered it his bounden duty to make out a case of urgent and instant necessity; he called on the House to repudiate the measure then introduced, if he should fail to make out such a case, and produce reasons convincing to the understanding and judgment of the House; and as the measure was precisely the same, the reasons for it should be equally strong now as those which were considered necessary and justifiable then. The noble Lord on that occasion did not tell us, as he told us to-night, that Ireland, throughout its length and breadth, was in a state of tranquillity, that the insurrection had no existence, that it was found easy to administer the Government of the country; but he (Mr. G. Thompson) believed the Lord Lieutenant's letter, and all the admissions of hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House, were concurrent with the fact that tranquillity did reign in Ireland, and the noble Lord urged them to assent to this for the purpose of continuing that tranquillity; but such was not the noble Lord's argument when he introduced this measure six months ago. What was his own language? That, when he called on the House hastily to sanction this measure, he conceived it was absolutely necessary he should prove three things as the ground of his justification for introducing the measure to the House. The first was, that the present state of things in Ireland was fraught with evil. He (Mr. G. Thompson) asked, was such the aspect of things at the present moment — that we were on the eve of an outbreak, if not timely prevented? The second was, that there were means sufficient to produce great injury and danger, unless some measures were adopted to avoid them; and the third was, that this was the remedy which appeared most appropriate in the present state of Ireland. The noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) went on to establish these several propositions by a variety of extracts from speeches recently delivered, newspapers recently published; and he did produce on that occasion an almost unanimous feeling in favour of the necessity of the measure which the House was then called on to adopt, and of the powers which it was requisite to place in the hands of Her Majesty's representative in Ireland. But had the noble Lord done so on the present occasion? Nothing of the kind; and there was this remarkable difference between the period when the measure was now brought forward and on the previous occasion, that whereas, in the latter case the House was on the eve of an adjournment after a protracted Session, they were now just assembled, and had six months before them; and if there was a necessity in the state of things in Ireland that these extraordinary powers should be placed in the hands of the Lord Lieutenant, there could be no necessity now, seeing that a totally opposite state of things prevailed, and that

Parliament was in possession of means of receiving rapidly information, and instantly applying a remedy. Not only did the noble Lord declare it to be his opinion that it was necessary he should make out a convincing and irresistible case, but the hon. Gentlemen opposite were of the same opinion; and the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire (Mr. Disraeli), following close on the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell), said that they were called upon to vote upon grounds that were made perfectly intelligible to the House. Were they called on to vote on such grounds to-night? They were called on to vote in utter ignorance of what might have induced Her Majesty's representative in Ireland to ask for these extraordinary powers. On a former occasion he had abstained from voting altogether; to-night he should vote with those who had offered their opposition to the measure. He could only regret that Her Majesty's Government had not taken advantage of the present state of things in Ireland to inform the House that it was their wish that this Act should expire on the 1st of March; that they should come down, and, absolutely in the face of their own admission that the people of Ireland had been penetrated by what the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department had been pleased to call the clemency and forbearance of the Lord Lieutenant, should ask the House to act on grounds that seemed to be totally convincing against the passing of any such measure.

Mr. SCULLY moved the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. J. O'CONNELL wished that the debate might be adjourned. Irish Members ought to be heard on such a subject as this.

The gallery was cleared for a division. The Amendment, was, however, withdrawn.

Mr. SCULLY then proceeded to speak to the original Motion. He hoped that, as representing a county which had been the principal scene of the late disturbances, he should be allowed to say a few words on the subject under consideration. The noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) had failed to impress upon him the necessity for a measure so coercive as the present. The noble Lord had urged its acceptance, not so much upon the ground that there was any disloyalty existing in Ireland, as that it was necessary to put an end to all political agitation which might lead to insurrectionary movement. He feared that, in endeavouring to suppress political agitation in Ireland, the Government would only be adding to the strength of the secret societies, which had ever been the bane of that country. The suppression of political agitation for the repeal of the Union would have the effect of suppressing every other species of political rights; public opinion would consequently be checked on all subjects whatever in Ireland. The suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act would render all public meetings liable to obstruction, and inflict by this means a great hardship on the people. He objected to the Bill, because it was deficient in itself, and because it was a wrong means to the end it professed to have in view. It would, in his opinion, rather tend to increase than to lessen the discontent which was alleged to prevail in Ireland. The noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) expressed sympathy for the distress of the Irish people; but he had not taken the means to relieve that distress, by providing them with employment. This Bill would certainly not relieve that distress. Ireland was never more free from political agitation than it was at this moment; and in no part of the empire was there more profound peace. When the noble Lord brought in the former Bill, he had promised large and liberal measures after the peace of the country was secured. Where, however, were those measures at that moment? A few not important Bills had been introduced, but the important one of all—to provide employment for the people—was not thought of. In Tipperary alone, hundreds of thousands of people were starving for want of work. He objected to the present measure, as he had to the former, not only as being inefficient for the purpose intended, but as being a very improper remedy for the grievances of the country. The people of Ireland were loyal and patient under all their sufferings; coercion was out of place, and therefore he should support the Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Limerick.

Mr. S. CRAWFORD should have wished to state his reasons for opposing the Bill; but he thought he would better consult the time of the House by taking another opportunity of doing so.

The House then divided on the question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—Ayes 221; Noes 18: Majority 203.

List of the AYES.

Abdy, T. N.
Adair, H. E.
Adair, R. A. S.
Anson, hon. Col.
Archdall, Capt. M.
Arkwright, G.
Armstrong, R. B.
Arundel and Surrey, Earl of
Bagot, hon. W.
Bagshaw, J.
Barrington, Visct.
Bass, T.
Bateson, T.
Bellew, R. M.
Berkeley, hon. Capt.
Berkeley, C. L. G.
Bernal, R.
Blackall, S. W.
Blair, S.
Boldero, H. G.
Bourke, R. S.
Bouverie, hon. E. P.
Bowles, Adm.
Brand, T.
Bremridge, R.
Brisco, M.
Brooke, Lord
Brotherton, J.
Brown, W.
Buller, Sir J. Y.
Bunbury, E. H.
Burke, Sir T. J.
Busfeild, W.
Buxton, Sir E. N.
Campbell, hon. W. F.
Carew, W. H. P.
Cavendish, hon. C. C.
Cavendish, W. G.
Cayley, E. S.
Charteris, hon. F.
Childers, J. W.
Christy, S.
Clay, J.
Clay, Sir W.
Clements, hon. C. S.
Cobbold, J. C.
Cockburn, A. J. E.
Cole, hon. H. A.
Compton, H. C.
Corry, rt. hon. H. L.
Cowper, hon. W. F.
Craig, W. G.
Dalrymple, Capt.
Deedes, W.
Disraeli, B.
Divett, E.
Douglas, Sir C. E.
Douro, Marq. of
Drummond, H.
Duckworth, Sir J. T. B.
Duke, Sir J.
Duncan, Visct.
Duncan, G.
Dundas, Adm.
Dundas, Sir D.
Dundas, G.
Ebrington, Visct.
Ellice, rt. hon. E.
Ellis, J.
Elliot, hon. J. E.
Ferguson, Sir R. A.
FitzPatrick, rt. hon. J.
Fitzwilliam, hon. G. W.
Floyer, J.
Foley, J. H. H.
Fordyce, A. D.
Forster, M.
Frewen, C. H.
Fuller, A. E.
Gladstone, rt. hon. W.
Glyn, G. C.
Goulburn, rt. hon. H.
Graham, rt. hon. Sir J.
Granby, Marq. of
Greenall, G.
Greene, T.
Grenfell, C. P.
Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.
Grey, R. W.
Guest, Sir J.
Gwyn, H.
Haggitt, F. R.
Halford, Sir H.
Hallyburton, Lord J. F.
Hamilton, J. H.
Hardcastle, J. A.
Harris, R.
Hastie, A.
Hastie, A.
Hawes, B.
Hay, Lord J.
Hayter, W. G.
Heald, J.
Heathcoat, J.
Henley, J. W.
Henry, A.
Herbert, H. A.
Herries, rt. hon. J. C.
Hervey, Lord A.
Heywortb, L.
Hill, Lord E.
Hobhouse, rt. hon. Sir J.
Hobhouse, T. B.
Hodges, T. T.
Hodgson, W. N.
Hogg, Sir J. W.
Hood, Sir A.
Howard, Lord E.
Howard, hon. C. W. G.
Howard, Sir R.
Inglis, Sir R. H.
Jackson, W.
Jervis, Sir J.
Keppel, hon. G. T.
Ker, R.
King, hon. P. J. L.
Knox, Col.
Labouchere, rt. hon. H.
Lascelles, hon. W. S.
Legh, G. C.
Lincoln, Earl of
Littleton, hon. E. R.
Locke, J.
Lockhart, W.
Mackenzie, W. F.
Macnaghten, Sir E.
M'Gregor, J.
Maitland, T.
Mandeville, Visct.
Mangles, R. D.
Martin, J.
Masterman, J.
Matheson, A.
Matheson, Col.
Maule, rt. hon. F.
Maunsell, T. P.
Melgund, Visct.
Meux, Sir H.
Miles, W.
Mitchell, T. A.
Moffatt, G.
Morgan, O.
Morison, Sir W.
Morris, D.
Mulgrave, Earl of
Mullings, J. R.
Mure, Col.
Newport, Visct.
Newry and Morne, Visct.
Nugent, Lord
Paget, Lord C.
Palmer, R.
Palmerston, Visct.
Parker, J.
Patten, J. W.
Peel, Col.
Perfect, R.
Plowden, W. H. C.
Plumptre, J. P.
Pugh, D.
Raphael, A.
Renton, J. C.
Ricardo, J. L.
Rich, H.
Romilly, Sir J.
Russell, Lord J.
Russell, hon. E. S.
Russell, F. C. H.
St. George, C.
Sandars, G.
Sandars, J.
Scrope, G. P.
Seymer, H. K.
Seymour, Lord
Sheil, rt. hon. R. L.
Shelburne, Earl of
Sheridan, R. B.
Simeon, J.
Slaney, R. A.
Smith, rt. hon. R. V.
Smith, J. A.
Smyth, J. G.
Smythe, hon. G.
Somerton, Visct.
Somerville, rt. hn. Sir W.
Spooner, R.
Stafford, A.
Stansfield, W. R. C.
Stuart, Lord D.
Talfourd, Serj.
Tancred, H. W.
Taylor, T. E.
Thesiger, Sir F.
Thompson, Col.
Thornely, T.
Tollemache, hon. F. J.
Towneley, J.
Townley, R. G.
Townshend, Capt.
Trelawny, J. S.
Turner, G. J.
Villiers, hon. C.
Walter, J.
Ward, H. G.
Watkins, Col. L.
Wellesley, Lord C.
Wilson, J.
Wilson, M.
Wood, rt. hon. Sir C.
Wortley, rt. hon. J. S.
Wyvill, M.

TELLERS.

Tufnell, H.
Hill, Lord M.

List of the NOES.

Barron, Sir H. W.
Crawford, W. S.
Devereux, J. T.
Dunne, F. P.
Fagan, W.
Greene, J.
Meagher, T.
Moore, G. H.
Muntz, G. F.
O'Connor, F.
O'Flaherty, A.
Roche, E. B.
Scholefield, W.
Scully, F.
Sullivan, M.
Tenison, E. K.
Thompson, G.
Williams, J.

TELLERS.

O'Connell, J.
Grattan, H.

Main Question put and agreed to; Bill ordered to be brought in.

ROMAN CATHOLIC DISABILITIES BILL.

MR. C. ANSTEY moved for leave to bring in a Bill for the further repeal of enactments imposing pains and penalties on Roman Catholics on account of their religious observances. Considering that he had never been refused the usual courtesy granted to hon. Members asking for leave to introduce a Bill of such a nature —considering also that his Bill was substantially the same as the Bill he was allowed to introduce last Session—further, considering that all the alterations made in it, had been made in the spirit of conciliation to the objections taken to it by hon. Gentlemen on that (the Opposition) side of the House, that it fully recognised the supremacy of the Queen after the passing of the Bill; considering all these things, he trusted it was not too much to expect that the usual courtesy would be extended him, that leave would be given to him to introduce the Bill, and that the discussion of its principle would be on the second reading.

Sir R. H. INGLIS trusted the hon. Gentleman would not think him guilty of any want of courtesy towards him, even although he found himself compelled to refuse the appeal which had been made to him. But when the House was told that the Bill was the same in substance as the Bill on which the House had pronounced an opinion in 1847, and the same as the one on which the House had also pronounced an opinion in 1848, he really felt it right to ask, considering the change which had within the last twenty-four hours taken place in the rules of that House, whether this was not the time, if the Bill was to be introduced, to enter upon the discussion of it. He did not exaggerate the fact, when he stated to the House, that for twelve Wednesdays of last Session, the House was occupied with the consideration of that Bill. The hon. Gentleman, who had, no doubt, a keener recollection than he possessed on the subject, would correct him if he were in error; but he believed, speaking from recollection and without reference to the almanack, that no less than twelve divisions took place on the question, and that not one of the Cabinet Ministers voted either on one side or the other, giving thus a tacit assent to the majorities recorded against the Bill. Under these circumstances, he did think that it would be found essential to the despatch of public business, if the opinion of the House was now strongly expressed on the question of the introduction of the Bill; and in case it was adverse, it might be considered as conclusive against proceeding with the Bill this Session. He was reluctant to oppose the introduction of the Bill, but he felt bound to take that course.

The Earl of ARUNDEL and SURREY appealed to the hon. and learned Member for Youghal to withdraw the Motion. He had been a warm supporter of it; but he felt that to persist in it, would cause a waste of the public time, from which no possible good could result, after the decision of the House had so recently been pronounced. He trusted the hon. and learned Gentleman would be content with having upon a former occasion obtained the approbation of the House to the principle of the measure, and not, under present circumstances, press it this Session. If the hon. and learned Member assented to this view, he (the Earl of Arundel and Surrey) was quite willing to take all the responsibility of that advice.

Mr. C. ANSTEY meant no disrespect towards the noble Earl, when he said he did not agree with him that he had been a warm supporter of the Bill. He considered that the noble Earl, and those who sat upon the same benches, had lost the Bill upon a former occasion; or, at least, that the absence of many Members from that side of the House was owing to the course taken by the noble Earl. He could not, therefore, concede either this or any other point to the noble Earl.

The Earl of ARUNDEL and SURREY said, the hon. and learned Gentleman had arrived at a most monstrous conclusion, so far as he was concerned; but he was not surprised at it, when he remembered the treatment which many of the hon. and learned Member's supporters received at his hands towards the end of the last Session.

Sir G. GREY feared that if the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Anstey) would not take the hint from his noble Friend (the Earl of Arundel), he would not take one from him. But, certainly, after the opinions that had been expressed, he (Sir G. Grey) could foresee nothing but waste of time, if the Bill was pressed. He had himself supported it upon a former occasion—he would not say very warmly—because he did not anticipate any very great benefit from it; but after what had occurred, he thought it would be well if the hon. and learned Gentleman were to take a little more time to consider whether it would be advantageous for the object he had in view to press the measure this Session.

Lord NUGENT also urged the hon. Member to withdraw his Motion, but without effect.

On the question—

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill for the further repeal of enactments imposing pains and penalties on Roman Catholics, on account of their religious observances;"—

The House thereupon divided:—Ayes 41; Noes 43: Majority 2.

List of the Ayes.

Adair, H. E.
Arundel and Surrey, Earl of
Bellew, R. M.
Blackall, S. W.
Bouverie, hon. E. P.
Brotherton, J.
Bunbury, E. H.
Clements, hon. C. S.
Duncan, Visct.
Duncan, G.
Dunne, F. P.
Fordyce, A. D.
Greene, J.
Haggitt, F. R.
Henry, A.
Hervey, Lord A.
Heyworth, L.
Jervis, Sir J.
Kershaw, J.
King, hon. P. J. L.
Lincoln, Earl of
Matheson, Col.
Mitchell, T. A.
Moffatt, G.
Moore, G. H.
Nugent, Lord
O'Flaherty, A.
Ricardo, J. L.
Somerville, rt. hon. Sir W.
Stuart, Lord D.
Sullivan, M.
Tenison, E. K.
Thompson, Col.
Thompson, G.
Thornely, T.
Tollemache, hon. F. J.
Townshend, Capt.
Trelawny, J. S.
Urquhart, D.
Williams, J.
Wilson, J.

TELLERS.
Anstey, T. C.
Grattan, H.

List of the Noes.

Arkwright, G.
Barrington, Visct.
Blair, S.
Boldero, H. G.
Bourke, R. S.
Brand, T.
Bremridge, R.
Brooke, Lord
Campbell, hon. W. F.
Carew, W. H. P.
Cavendish, hon. C. C.
Charteris, hon. F.
Christy, S.
Cobbold, J. C.
Deedes, W.
Duckworth, Sir J. T. B.
Floyer, J.
Frewen, C. H.
Greenall, G.
Gwyn, H.
Hallyburton, Lord J. F.
Hamilton, J. H.
Heald, J.
Henley, J. W.
Hodgson, W. N.
Hood, Sir A.
Legh, G. C.
Lockhart, W.
Mackenzie, W. F.
Mandeville, Visct.
Morgan, O.
Mullings, J. R.
Newry and Morne, Visct.
Palmerston, Visct.
Plowden, W. H. C.
Plumptre, J. P.
St. George, C.
Sandars, G.
Seymer, H. K.
Stafford, A.
Talfourd, Serj.
Turner, G. J.
Wortley, rt. hon. J. S.

TELLERS.
Inglis, R. H.
Spooner, R.

Leave to bring in the Bill refused.
House adjourned at One o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, February 7, 1849.

Minutes.] Public Bills.—2° Inland Revenue.
Petitions Presented. By Mr. Trelawny, from a Public Meeting held at Tavistock, for an Alteration of the Law respecting the Church of England Clergy.—By Mr. Plumptre, from Maidstone, against the Endowment of the Roman Catholic Clergy.—By Mr. Hume, from the Island of Ceylon, praying for Reformatory Measures for that Island.—By Mr. Plumptre, from Maidstone, for Encouragement to Schools in Connexion with the Church Education Society (Ireland).—By Mr. Ward, from the Artisans of Broad Lane Works, Sheffield, for Referring War Disputes to Arbitration.

REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS, &c.—SANITARY REGULATIONS (IRELAND).

Mr. MEAGHER wished to know from the right hon. Baronet the Secretary for Ireland, whether there was any probability of Bills being brought forward for the registration of births, deaths, and marriages in Ireland, and for sanitary regulation?

Sir W. SOMERVILLE had to state in answer, that a Bill for the registration of births, deaths, and marriages in Ireland was under consideration. He could not undertake to say, that it would be in his power to bring it forward this Session, but he hoped it might be. With respect to a Health of Towns Bill, he had a Bill prepared which he hoped it might be in his power to submit to the House shortly.

RELIEF OF DISTRESS (IRELAND).

On the Motion of the CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER the House resolved itself into Committee on the above subject, Mr. Bernal in the Chair.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER said, he rose, in pursuance of the notice he had given, to move that the Committee agree to a vote for the purpose of affording relief to certain unions in the west of Ireland. Gentlemen would probably recollect that a similar vote was proposed at the end of last Session. When the failure of the potato crop was apprehended, questions were put to his noble Friend and himself as to the course the Government intended to pursue; and they were urged at that time to bring forward some measure for the purpose of affording relief to the destitution prevalent in some parts of Ireland. The answer they gave was, that they did not think it expedient at that time to bring forward any large measure whatever; and that if circumstances should be such as to render it necessary, it would be their duty to call Parliament together before any step of that kind was taken; but they did ask the House to entrust them with some small discretionary power, in order to enable them to take measures, if they should turn out to be necessary, for the preservation of human life. That course seemed to meet the acquiescence of the House; and he recollected that the hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume) whom he did not now see in his place, afterwards stated that he entirely concurred in it. His first duty would be, to give an account of what had been done since the close of the last Session in pursuance of this plan. Hon. Gentlemen had probably seen the report published by the British Association of Relief extended to certain unions in Ireland in the course of the years 1847 and 1848. A state of things very similar to that of the former year existed in the course of last autumn, for although a larger quantity of potatoes was planted in many parts of Ireland than in the year 1847, the failure had been nearly as general as in the year 1846, and the quantity available for food was not greater than in 1847. It had become, therefore, absolutely necessary in some few instances to afford relief. It turned out, however, that there were available funds remaining from those collected by voluntary subscription by the British Association. These had, to the extent of 12,000*l.*, been issued to some of the unions; but when they were exhausted, the Government were called upon to make some further advance. They had made an advance to the amount of 3,000*l.*; that was the extent to which they had exercised the discretion entrusted to them by Parliament after the funds collected by the British Association were exhausted. At the earliest possible moment of the new Session, they were desirous of stating what had been done; and he should next proceed to inform the House what they proposed to do, under the present circumstances of Ireland, and particularly of the western portion of that country. The papers which had been delivered yesterday morning, were by no means all they might have laid on the table of the House: but they thought it far better to lay on the table a few papers which Gentlemen probably would have time to read, than to call on them to wade through the interminable pages of a large blue book. It was certainly very satisfactory to have to state that, with the exception of a very small portion of Ireland, he did not believe that any assistance whatever was either wished for or necessary; the greater portion of the east and north of Ireland was not more distressed at this moment than parts of the south of England. The rates were collected as easily as in many parts of the south of England. In other parts of Ireland there was not the least need of assistance if proper exertions were made. He might refer to the case of the union of Listowel, in which the collection of the rates had fallen into some disorder. An active officer was sent down, and within six weeks the demands over due were not only paid, but a balance of 700*l.* remained in the treasurer's hands. It was, notwithstanding, imperatively necessary, unless they wished to see hundreds perishing from starvation in certain districts of Ireland, that some assistance should be given by this country. He thought it indispensable that the distribution of that assistance should be administered under the most stringent and rigorous regulations, in order to prevent fraud. Hon. Gentlemen complained of the poor-law, and attributed to it all those evils which now afflicted Ireland—evils which might more justly be attributed to the dispensation of Providence in the failure of that main article of food on which so large a proportion of the population of Ireland depended. He perfectly agreed in the observation of the hon. Gentleman behind him, that the present state of things in Ireland was abnormal, and not such as the poor-law was calculated to relieve. He (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) was not surprised at the statements he had heard of the extreme unpopularity of the poor-law in all parts of Ireland, not only amongst those who paid the rates, but those who received relief. No doubt to both parties it would be infinitely more agreeable that relief should be afforded from the treasury of the United Kingdom. Those who paid rates would naturally prefer not having to pay, and those who received relief, now rigorously administered as it was, in order to prevent abuses, would infinitely prefer to receive it in the shape in which it was administered in the year 1847, when there was no machinery adequate to the purpose of correcting the abuses which prevailed from one end of the country to the other. He thought, judging from the experience of the last two years, that the machinery of the poor-law was that best adapted to afford the relief which he believed to be necessary. He considered that the evils which prevailed in Ireland were in no degree to be ascribed to the poor-law, as the effect of that law was to mitigate and palliate the evils which arose from the failure of the food of the people. A letter of Mr, Lang, relief inspector, from the Bantry union, very clearly explained the effects which had recently occurred on the condition of the population:—

> "That the Commissioners may have a clear conception of the grounds on which I found my opinion, it may be expedient to give a brief sketch of the circumstances under which a large proportion of the landed property of the union had been placed for many years previous to the failure of the potato crop. When this was a potato-growing country, and the crop flourished, the landlords and the middlemen found it an easy and certain mode of increasing their incomes, to permit every tenant or branch of his family to erect hovels of any description on every patch of land among the glens and rocks of the mountains or along the sea-coast, and rather to countenance than discourage the establishment of swarms of cottier tenants on their lands. These contrived, either by taking con-acres from the larger occupiers, or by cultivating patches of their own holdings, to grow sufficient potatoes to fatten a pig or two to pay the rent. Hordes of this class of cottier tenantry, when they had planted the patch of potatoes in spring, shut up their cabins or left them in charge of the aged and infirm, and led an idle, vagrant, begging life throughout the summer months. To some of these cottier holdings was attached the privilege of grazing a cow, and a few sheep or goats, upon the adjacent mountains—and from each of these tenements the landlord or the middleman contrived to squeeze out a rent from 1*l.* to 5*l.* yearly; and these rents were better paid than any stranger to the country and the habits of the people could have believed it possible to exact from such a class of tenantry. Hence, the greater the amount of population a proprietor could locate on his estate, the larger became the rent-roll. The consequences of the failure of the only crop upon which these masses subsisted and depended for the payment of rent, may easily be conceived; they became one and all paupers, and were thrown on the rates for support: large tracts of land became waste and unproductive, from which there is now neither rate nor rent to be obtained—the landlords had exacted the last farthing. At no period could such a class of tenantry accumulate any capital or means to fall back upon for subsistence; and the whole system induced and inculcated those idle and vagrant habits, and that indisposition to fixed and steady habits of industry, so generally complained of, and now falsely attributed to the operation of the poor-law, and its demoralising influence. But the same apathy and want of energy and exertion existed always and were the natural consequences of the system. It was then only seen—now it begins to be felt."

He believed this description applied to a large portion of the western districts of Ireland, and coming from an eye-witness was well worthy of attention. The consequence of this state of things was, that a certain portion of the higher class of ratepayers had no longer the means of paying rates, and that others who formerly had paid rates became themselves dependent for support upon the rates. If any hon. Gentleman attributed this state of things to the poor-law, he would ask of him to consider what the position of affairs would be if the poor-law did not exist? It was obvious that if there had been no poor-law in Ireland during the late season of famine, hundreds of thousands of persons must necessarily have died of absolute destitution. Robbery and plunder must have prevailed to a frightful extent; for it was not to be expected that the rights of property would have been respected by starving crowds, and probably something like a servile war would have broken out. The efforts that would then, no doubt, be made to put that down, would have been attended with much greater expense to this country than any that they were now called upon to bear. After the destruction of the potato crop, it became evident that for three consecutive years the amount of the population and the amount of food were no longer adequate to each other, and that the former must be diminished or the latter increased before the country could be restored to a state of safety. The diminution of the population had gone on. It was impossible to deny but that many persons had died, if not from actual starvation, at least from disease brought on by an insufficient supply of food. But, in addition to this, emigration had gone on to a considerable extent, to nearly half a million in two years, principally to America. He had before him the papers that had been just laid before Parliament relating to the aid afforded to the distressed unions in the west of Ireland, and he had also some connected with the Ballina union, which had arrived that day, and were, he regretted to say, not in time to be printed with the others. From these documents it appeared that an extraordinary diminution of the population had taken place in some unions. Captain Kennedy, the temporary poor-law inspector, wrote to the Commissioners on the 7th of November last, respecting the Kilrush union:—

> "I do not believe that there are a sufficient number of labourers in this union to bring it to the same degree of cultivation and productiveness as some parts of the county of Down and Antrim: and yet the whole labouring population are starving, while hardly an acre is drained or improved. At a very moderate computation I believe that four times the quantity of food might be produced."

Now, if they did not get wages, how could the people buy food? It was right to add, however, that Captain Kennedy stated in his report that—

> "The rates are being well and cheerfully paid, and the influential classes, however embarrassed they may be, do not evade their payment, or encourage others in opposition."

Captain Kennedy in the same letter thus described the utter apathy of the owners of the soil in the Kilrush Union:—

> "The utter absence of employment of any kind throughout the union is almost incredible, and where such is given it is in exchange for food alone, a very limited number of persons in the union giving wages. I can see no solution of the difficulties and distresses of this union save by a well-directed effort on the part of proprietors and occupiers to give reproductive employment; such, however, under existing circumstances, will not or cannot be given, though all practical men agree in its necessity, and that a finer or more profitable field for labour cannot be found. The Land Improvement Act has conferred no benefit on this union, a very trifling sum having been applied for or taken under it. A universal distrust and want of confidence exists between all classes, which prevents the useful efforts of individuals having their desired effects. The extensive dispossession of the small landholders, and consolidation of farms, will require time to produce their anticipated good effects, while the suffering and embarrassments are immediate and undoubted."

Every exertion was being made, in order to secure the due and proper administration of the poor-law; but from the people having been turned out of their holdings in large numbers, a very large proportion of the population, indeed, had become dependent on the rates. He alluded to this matter in order to show that the complaints which were so constantly made of the existence of a great superabundant population in Ireland were by no means universally true. As to the Ballina union, which was also one of the most distressed unions in the country, the opinion not only of the poor-law inspector, but of two or three other gentlemen who had been examined, and whose evidence was before him, was that the population was not too large, not merely for the cultivation of waste lands, but of the lands actually under culture. Colonel Knox Gore, a large proprietor in the county of Sligo, stated that

> "There is quite enough of land in this district to employ all the ablebodied population, without taking into account the bog and mountain land that might be reclaimed; the improvement of which, with very few exceptions, I believe to be a ruinous speculation."

It is notorious that emigration had been carried on to a most remarkable extent, and it so happened that this emigration had proceeded most extensively in those unions in which the greatest distress prevailed. The consequence was, that estates had, in the more impoverished districts, been relieved from the great number of cottier tenants with which they had been crowded, and who had been always spoken of as the great and insuperable obstacle to the improvement of the land. Alluding to this subject, Colonel Knox Gore said—

> "I have lost nearly one-third of my smaller tenants since 1846. Most of them have emigrated to America, or have become labourers, occupying cottages and gardens."

Major Gardener stated that he had lost seven-eighths of his tenants principally by emigration. Now, when the reduction of the population had taken place to so great an extent, he very much doubted whether it would be for the advantage of the country to encourage any farther removal of the people, who were absolutely necessary for the proper cultivation of the soil. The great decrease in the number of small tenements, and the increase in those of larger size, were, in some instances, most satisfactory. In the union of Ballina the number of tenements valued under 4*l*. in 1846 was 17,216, while in 1849 the number was 10,354, showing a diminution in this class of tenantry of 6,862; and in the case of tenements valued under 8*l*., there had been a decrease, in the same union, of 7,676, within the same period. In the two poorest electoral divisions of the union, there was, at the same time, an increase in the number of large tenements; the increase in one of these districts—that of Belmullet—being from 77 to 98, for the year 1849, as compared with 1846. The result of this state of things was, that in those unions where the greatest distress prevailed, they were approaching a state when there was every ground to hope that improvement would take place. The extra population was removed from them, and what was now wanting was a supply of capital in the hands of active proprietors or tenants, able and determined properly to cultivate the land. He had already quoted the evidence of Colonel Gore before the poor-law inspectors, and further on he found the following remarks on this part of the subject. Colonel Gore stated that—

> "I look entirely to the improvement on the waste lands to give me enough to feed and clothe my family: for as to carriages, wine, and other luxuries, I have long since given them up, and my establisment is now like a mere rent-paying farmer, struggling to pay by exertion of skill and industry a high rent, which the rates and county cess are on waste lands."

He (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) might mention a still more melancholy case; that of a gentleman, Colonel V. Jackson, who for some time exerted himself with the greatest success as a guardian of the Swineford union. The sacrifices which that gentleman incurred, and the ruin which came upon him in consequence, obliged him to apply to the Poor Law Commissioners for employment; they were too happy to serve him; he was appointed to a district in the south of Ireland, where he proved himself to be a most efficient officer; but he was sorry to say that he very shortly caught a fever in visiting the Ennis workhouse, and the country had been deprived of his services by death. While so many attacks were made—perhaps in some cases with much justice — on the gentlemen of Ireland, for attempts to evade the liabilities of their position, he felt very happy to take that opportunity of doing justice to a nobleman whose name had been mentioned on a former occasion in that House with some blame. He meant the Earl of Lucan. That nobleman had, he was glad to be able to say, devoted himself with great success to the cultivation and reclamation of the land. He had employed a large number of people on his estates, and had removed a portion of the remaining population to America. His improvements had been carried on over a great tract of country in the Castlebar union, and with every possible success. He (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) would now read to the House the conclusion of the report from the inspector as to the Ballina union. It had not yet been printed; but he could assure the House that it was well deserving of their attention :—

> " In conclusion, I may state that up to the present the rates have been comparatively light in this union, but they have been as heavy as could have been borne. As I before said, I am surprised that they have been paid so well, considering the state of the union—a state which I do believe requires to be seen to be believed. At all events, I have seen nothing to equal it, although I have no doubt there are some of the neighbouring unions just as bad. I do not attribute the present insolvent state of the ratepayers to the amount of rates which they have been called upon to pay; neither do I attribute the present deplorable condition of the recipients of relief to the potato failure of last year. The ratepayers will, no doubt, be benefited; but I do not believe that an improved condition of the majority of the recipients of relief is at all contingent upon the success of the potato or any other description of crop. What the latter classes require is the circulating medium, without which they cannot honestly profit by an abundance of food at any price. If the labourers were inclined to work hard, and employers were inclined and able to encourage them by paying fair wages, there is more than an abundance of profitable labour for every labourer in the union, and the rates might be considerably reduced. At present the labourers are badly able to work; they have suffered so many hardships in various ways, that a robust healthy-looking man is rarely to be met with. Most of the landlords cannot afford to pay for work: those who can are in dread of the undefined prospect of rates; and, with two or three exceptions, are doing as little as they possibly can. Whether the future success of the potato crop would enable and induce the landlords to pay fair wages for fair work, is, I think, very doubtful. It appears to me the tendency would be rather to return to the old state of affairs, notwithstanding the bitter experience of the last three years. I can, therefore, see no other remedy for the present and probable state of the union, but a great change and importation of proprietors; and I think that moderate rates on the average for a time will effect this sooner than rates which cannot be paid, and which will effectually prevent any person worth having from settling or investing capital in this union."

The rates in that union amounted to 2*s.* 10*d.*; but that fact gave a very inadequate view of the real state of pressure from taxation, for the rate in the pound on many electoral divisions was much higher, and in many it was almost impossible to make any collection. He might continue this description by referring to many other parts of Ireland; but he thought it was better for him to confine his remarks to one or two of the unions; and he had taken Ballina union as being one of the worst in the country. He thought that he had entered sufficiently upon the question to show that in the present state of these unions employment to a large extent, in proportion to the remaining population, might be given; but during the suspension of that employment, and in the present depressed state of the unions, he would ask, how was this country to stand by and see thousands of their fellow-subjects starving, and left without the means of supporting life—a state of distress which could not possibly be prevented by any local efforts for some months to come. In the Ballina union the last rate struck was between 16,000*l.* and 17,000*l.*, and to the collection of this large amount, so far as it had gone, no obstruction had been offered, or no evasion attempted, on the part of those who were at all able to pay. But if hon. Gentlemen would turn to pages 14 and 15 of the returns, they would find that there was a large proportion of the land waste, and in which it was utterly impossible to collect the rates by any means whatever. He would read a few of the returns of the defaulters, in order to show how they were circumstanced, and whose actual condition was but too truly described:—

> "Denis Bingham, esq., Binghamstown, 194*l*. 17*s*. 6½*d*.—There is an execution against Mr. Bingham's body for the former rate due by him.
>
> "Daniel Madden, esq., Ballycastle, 69*l*. 17*s*. 8*d*. These properties are nearly all waste; there is not, I believe, 20*l*. worth of stock on them.
>
> "Mrs. William Bingham, Belmullet, 41*l*. 8*s*.—Mrs. Bingham has hardly the means of supporting herself. I understand some tenants, who possess stock, have lately taken farms from her. The collector will distrain the lands as soon as he can legally do so.
>
> "Mr. Short is in distressed circumstances. The collector will serve a fifteen days' notice. There is hardly anything on the lands.
>
> "Mr. Fowler died lately. There is hardly anything on the lands."

In another case—

> "The lands are a complete waste."

As to several other cases, the observation is—

> "These lands are nearly all waste. It would be useless to take proceedings against any of the parties; they have scarcely the means of supporting themselves."

If hon. Members would now turn to page 21, they would see a list containing the names of the twelve highest ratepayers in the electoral division of Kilcrohane, in the Bantry union; and it appeared that out of those twelve there were only four from whom there was the slightest chance of obtaining payment, the remarks in the other eight cases being, "Lands waste; tenants run away; no distress; tenants paupers;" and so on. He would now refer the Committee to one more union—the Clifden union. At page 45:—

The net value of union . . .	£19,986
Ditto, at and under 4*l*. . .	7,434
Ditto, given up to landlords, not occupied, and now waste . .	9,449
Ditto, of holdings, the occupiers of which are so poor that it is impossible to recover rates from .	1,673

> These two last sums make 11,122*l*., being nearly eleven-nineteenths of the whole valuation unproductive as to rates."

Hon. Gentlemen would see from these statements that in the greater portion of this electoral division it was utterly and altogether impossible that the rates could be expected. The facts of last year with regard to many of the unions were conclusive as to the present, because it was not to be supposed that the conditions of these unions would be better for this present year than they were in the last. More of the lands would be left waste, and the capacity of those who paid in the unions be diminished both in number and in power. But if hon. Members would refer to page 10, they would see the expenditure in some of those unions for the last year, and the sums that had been collected. Assistance had been given to those unions by the Government, principally from the produce of the voluntary subscriptions of the British Association. If anybody would compare the expense incurred in those unions, together with the amount collected, and the amount that it had been necessary to advance, they would be convinced that it was utterly impossible to obtain from those unions the sums that were required. In the union of Ballina the amount required was 52,282*l*., and the amount advanced in aid by the British Association was 36,260*l*. He saw no prospect that the sum required for the relief of the poor would be less this year than it was last. He had already stated that 10,177*l*. had been collected last autumn in the union of Ballina, which left a deficiency of about 6,000*l*. More might possibly be collected in the course of this summer. But it was not easy at that period of the year to make any great collections; and even if they were to double the sum, it would be utterly inadequate to the maintenance of life among the paupers in the union. So also with Ballinrobe, Castlebar, and the others. This state of things, however, did not apply to Ireland generally. The collection of poor's-rate throughout the country had been very large. If hon. Gentlemen would turn to the last page of these papers, they would see, that taking Ireland throughout, a very large part of the rates had been collected. They must remember that this was a new measure in Ireland; and though he was not disposed to be lenient where the rates could be collected, yet he felt that where it was utterly impossible to collect them, that House must come forward to their relief. The amount of poor-rate collected in Ireland was—

In the year ending Sept. 29,	1846	...	£371,846
„ „ „	1847	...	638,403
„ „ „	1848	...	1,627,700

He thought that it would not be denied, therefore, that great exertions had been used, that rates had been collected to a considerable amount, though they certainly were not adequate to the wants of the poor. In nine-tenths of Ireland, he believed, the people were perfectly capable to pay the rates, as much so as they were in England. That being the state of the case, her Majesty's Government, after various statements had been made to them, of which what he had read were samples, had come to the conclusion that it was necessary to give assistance from the public funds to those unions. He quite agreed with those who thought that assistance ought to be given under the most stringent and rigorous supervision, as he believed that nothing but such regulations would prevent the grant from being abused. He was willing and anxious that the sums so applied should be only given to prevent starvation, to prevent loss of life to a degree that would be perfectly frightful. The means by which he proposed to do this was, not as last year, by a vote of supply, but to take the money out of the Consolidated Fund; and the reasons why he proposed such a course were these: they had, in the first place, received a sum of 78,000*l.*, in repayment of advances made to relief committees, that was to say, they had received this from those unions which were in a better condition than others in Ireland, and had to that extent repaid their advances. In the next place, of the sum which had been issued to Sir John Burgoyne's Relief Committee they were enabled to reserve 106,000*l.*, independent of the sum of 100,000*l.*, which he had saved out of the same fund last year. He had, therefore, been able to carry the sum of 106,000*l.* to the account of the Consolidated Fund. More than that, he was happy to say that the revenue of the country had so improved in the course of the autumn, that he had every reason to hope that the sum which he had thought it necessary to borrow to meet the current expenditure had not been required; the current revenue would be found equal to the expenditure of the year, and therefore that sum was still in the Exchequer, as it was not wanted to defray the expenditure of the year. [Mr. Goulburn asked what was the total amount of the sums alluded to?] Hon. Gentlemen would remember he had stated last year that he had reduced the expenditure within 292,000*l.* of the estimated income of the year. He believed now that the estimated income would equal the expenditure. The sum which was voted to what was called Sir John Burgoyne's Relief Commission was 1,700,000*l.* Of that sum, 106,000*l*, yet remained, which might not unfairly be considered available to the relief of the distressed unions. In addition to that, there was the 78,000*l.* repaid by certain of the unions, making together an available fund of 184,000*l.* And this sum was, it must be understood, entirely exclusive of the repayments for relief works, amounting to about 39,000*l.*, which for a certain time would be available for the execution of further works of a similar description. He proposed now to take a sum not exceeding 50,000*l.* from the Consolidated Fund: he did not mean to say that that was all that might be required in the course of the year, but he thought it would be inexpedient to name a larger sum, because he thought it would excite hopes and expectations which would be unfavourable to the moral condition of the people. He wished to obtain the sanction of Parliament for that sum, leaving it with them to grant or to withhold any future sum which might appear to be necessary; and of course, he must have the sanction of the Legislature, and an Act of Parliament, for every grant that was made. The sum which he now proposed would enable Government to afford assistance for a certain time; and before any further grant could be made, it would be his duty again to come down to Parliament and to ask for their sanction. The vote which he now proposed to put into the Chairman's hands was—

> "That the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland be authorised to direct the issue out of the Consolidated Fund of the said United Kingdom of any sum, not exceeding 50,000*l.*, for affording relief to certain distressed Poor Law Unions in Ireland."

Mr. P. SCROPE apologised for presenting himself so early in the debate; but as this was a vote for the disbursing of funds from the Imperial Exchequer, he thought that an English Gentleman was entitled to express his opinions upon the subject. He thanked God to find that the Government had discovered at length the futility of relying upon the voluntary exertions of the Irish landowners, who as a body either would not, or could not, or at any rate did not employ the people, or apply a remedy which was fitted to rescue them out of their present horrible condition. He had placed a Motion on the Paper to-day which he should now press in the form of an Amendment to the present Vote. He by no means dissented from the proposition that it was necessary for the Government to step in and advance public money for the relief of these distressed unions. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman (Sir C. Wood) that it was impossible they could support themselves, and that multitudes would die of starvation unless they were supported by extraneous aid. The difference between him and the right hon. Gentleman was not as to the source from whence the funds were to be derived, but as to the mode in which it was to be given; whether it was to be made an absolute present to the people of those districts, or whether it was to be given on conditions which would ensure, in the first place, that the money would be spent in productive labour on the land; and, in the second place, and as a consequence of that productive employment, that the money so advanced should be repaid from the land. He knew many persons would say, "What! repayments from Ireland!—how is that to be expected? We have already lent them 6,000,000*l.* or 8,000,000*l.*, and in the course of six months afterwards we were obliged to excuse the half of them, and the recovery of the money from the other half of them is highly problematical." Now, he believed that these advances would not be repaid if they were spent as the last had been, in feeding paupers in idleness. But he believed they would be repaid if they were spent in the cultivation of those rich and fertile lands which they had heard were now lying waste. The evil was, that when money was advanced, the Irish gentlemen spent it upon anything and nothing, because they never expected that the sums were to be repaid. But it would be a very different thing, if the money was spent in the draining of bogs, and bringing land into a reproductive state. The proposition which he was about to make to the House consisted of two parts: first, that the money should be advanced only upon loan, and that a strict lien should be taken for it upon the rateable property in the union; and, in the second place, that the money so advanced should be productively expended, not in feeding idle paupers, whether in or out of the workhouse, while the lands were lying waste. The proposition appeared to him to be so undeniable, that he could hardly conceive how any one could object to it, if it were not for the fact, that up to this time for the last three years the system pursued by the Government had been the very reverse. The money was indeed nominally lent, but it was really given, and it was spent in the most unproductive manner. Ablebodied labourers were employed on works that were of no use whatever, and the consequence was that the infirm poor, who could not work, died in vast numbers. Then came the system of soup kitchens, which of course was unproductive — 3,000,000 of people were fed in that way, while about 700,000 ablebodied paupers were left useless in the workhouses. In some of the unions—those in which the whole number of applicants could not be accommodated—the inspectors had recommended the principle of giving the preference in admission to ablebodied men, with whom, in several instances, the workhouses were filled. What a condition for a district to be reduced to—the greater portion of the ablebodied labourers cooped up in a workhouse, useless to themselves and to society! In some districts the inspectors had introduced, but only to a very small extent, the principle of the self-supporting system, and in these instances that system had worked admirably. In the Kilrush union the ablebodied paupers had been employed upon the workhouse farm; but this was a breach of the general rule laid down by the Commissioners; but owing to the intervention of Captain Kennedy, the experiment was allowed to be tried. Let the Government follow that example, or let them imitate the Quakers of Mayo, who had taken up about 500 acres of land that had been left waste, and had produced admirable crops from it. He did not care whether they operated upon what was commonly called "waste land," or upon land which had been left waste. In either case, by so employing the paupers of Ireland, they interfered less with private property and private industry than by employing them in any other way. This would be an immense advantage in a moral point of view, and the expenses incurred would be no heavier than they were at present. The only species of labour which the Commissioners were willing, however, to sanction, was stone-breaking within the workhouse. What was the result of this system in an economic point of view? He (Mr. P. Scrope) had been assured by a gentleman who was a witness to the fact, that upwards of 100*l.* had actually been paid to the peasantry for breaking a heap of stones, which, in the ordinary payment for labour, would have cost only 30*s.* Surely digging and building in the open air formed as good a task as breaking stones within a workhouse. He put it to the hon. Members whether they would not execute with great repugnance a work which they knew to be unprofitable? Would they not look upon it as a peculiarly offensive and unthankful task? Would they not, in the present instance, be inclined to consider that the test of unprofitable labour was nothing but a sort of punishment for being poor. It was scarcely necessary for him, after what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to refer to the enormous resources which existed in many Irish unions for the employment of the pauper population. He might mention, however, that in a group of eight unions the expenditure for the relief of the poor, ending September 1848, had been 222,311*l.*, while the rates collected in these eight unions for the same period amounted only to 44,195*l.*, leaving an amount of upwards of 160,000*l.*, or four times the amount of rates which had been collected, to be made up by Government grants, and by the exertions of the British Association. In fact, the assistance thus afforded amounted to a rate of 8*s.* 6*d.* in the pound. This statement showed the amount of distress in the unions in question. Now then, on the other hand, what were the resources of the unions in question? The area of these eight unions was 2,228,000 acres. In the year 1847 the extent of land, out of that great superficies which was under cultivation—including in the estimate all the meadow, grass, and clover land—amounted only to 221,000 acres, being less than 1-10th of the whole area, the remaining two millions of acres being left in a state of absolutely unprofitable waste. Thus it would appear that in many cases 9-10ths of the area of the unions for which the House was called on to grant money was absolutely unproductive. Now, surely this fact was sufficient to prove that money ought to be advanced as loans, not as gifts. Granting money without hope or prospect of repayment in such circumstances as those to which he was alluding, was actually putting a bonus, not only upon mismanagement of the poor-laws, but upon mismanagement of land. What reasons had they for supposing that if this system were to go on the state of matters would ever improve? They had heard of vast tracts of land left waste, from which no rates would or could be extracted. Why, then, it was quite clear that if they extracted rates from land productively employed, and excused land not in cultivation, the evil of which they complained would spread, until every union would become one unproductive waste. What was the remedy which he proposed to employ? It was, that the House should insist upon those waste lands being cultivated, and that the ablebodied paupers should be employed for that purpose. Why should not a measure be passed compelling boards of guardians to expend, in this useful and profitable way, the labour which was now wasted? Such a plan would be productive of no interference with private industry or enterprise, as the land to be thus cultivated would otherwise lie waste. Let it never be lost sight of that they were obliged to maintain an immense mass of labour, whether they used it or not. Was it not then better to employ it profitably than to maintain it in useless idleness? Let them look to the abuses to which the present system gave rise. There was the case of the Westport union. The inhabitants of that union lately applied to Government for assistance, and Mr. Redington, in reply, sent them a debtor and creditor account of their monetary relations with Government, from which it appeared that within the last two years they had received 93,000*l.* of the public money in grants, and 40,000*l.* in loans, making 133,000*l.* spent in the union to make up the rates; while the ratepayers had only raised and expended about 4,000*l.*, or, according to the Marquess of Sligo's account, 8,000*l.* Upon this subject, however, the Marquess of Sligo's answer was—

> "It is not we of the Westport union who have expended this money, but it is the Government who have insisted on spending it unproductively, and in the establishment of soup kitchens, the consequence of which is that we are not able to repay you your money, not able to maintain our poor, and are getting less able to maintain them every day."

He (Mr. Scrope) thought that the noble Marquess had perfectly cleared himself by that statement. 26,000 of the population of the Westport union were at this moment wasting the food that they ate, and were prevented employing themselves by the system which the Government adopted. Now it was said by many that the system which he was advocating was a Louis-Blanc system; but, far from his proposal resembling the schemes of the French theorist, the only true parallel which could be afforded to the workshops in Paris was the case of the workhouses in Ireland, where they were cooping up ablebodied labourers, who wasted their energy in unprofitable toil, or lived in a state of sloth, idly toasting their shins by the fire. The system was demoralising the people. It was teaching them systematic idleness, instead of industry. (He (Mr. P. Scrope) had the highest opinion of the industry and energy with which the Irish people worked at ordinary labour. No people under the sun worked better. But they were being physically and morally lowered and incapacitated for labour by the present workhouse system. It had, besides, a most grievous effect upon the health of the inmates. There were some places in which the mortality amounted to a fourth of the entire number of inmates in the course of each week, so that they would be completely emptied by death twelve times in the course of each year. [The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: These were all the deaths.] At all events the proportion of deaths was frightful and horrible. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had alleged that the present state of the Irish people was an abnormal one. If so, it required an abnormal remedy. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to be looking for the time when a total change of the proprietary of Ireland would take place. But when would it take place? How long were they to wait for it? He thought that something should be tried as soon as possible; and with the view of making a distinct proposition, he would move an Amendment—to add the following words to the Resolution of the right hon. Baronet the Chancellor of the Exchequer:—

> "But that no appropriation of Monies taken from general Taxation be applied in aid of the Poor's-Rate of Irish Unions, except on condition that its repayment be secured by a lien on the rateable property of the Union."

In conclusion, he should only say, that he did not pretend to point out the exact mode in which his proposition should be carried out. He only asked that in some way or another there should be a lien given upon the land for the repayment of loans, and that some means should be taken by which productive employment should be supplied to the Irish poor.

The question having been put by the Chairman,

MR. CHRISTOPHER said, that the House was again asked to vote relief to the Irish poor out of English means. He stood there as an English representative, and he said he was not prepared to concur in such a vote. When they considered that it was only a very short time ago that this country stept out of its usual course, and granted no less than four millions of money to the people of Ireland; when the House had agreed to grant in the way of loan an additional four millions to the people, a very small portion of which had been repaid, and, considering the state of the country, he ventured to predict that a very small portion would ever be restored to the Treasury; when he considered the present state of the labouring poor in this country; when he considered that the workhouses were rapidly filling with ablebodied paupers (he could speak from a knowledge of his own county); when the gaols were being filled with mendicants, and when, in a gaol in his own district, they had been obliged to fit up the chapel to form dormitories for the reception of those mendicants—how was it possible for the people of England to acquiesce in the present vote? It was laid down as a rule, when the four millions were granted, and when an additional four millions were given as a loan for the relief of the poor of Ireland, that in future Ireland should maintain its own poor. Was it not too much to ask the House now completely to reverse that principle, and to grant, out of the Consolidated Fund, a sum of money for the relief of the poor of Ireland? Although the grant was only 50,000*l.*, apparently no very great grant, yet the right hon. Baronet the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave the House to understand that he might possibly come forward and ask for more. They must now stand on this principle—was Ireland to maintain her own poor, or were the people of England to be called on annually to contribute to the relief of their necessities? He (Mr. Christopher) stood upon the original principle laid down, and he would vote no more money for relief to Ireland. He preferred upon the present occasion the Amendment proposed by the hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. P. Scrope), because it opposed the grant, although it did not express his opinions; but if any hon. Gentleman would stand boldly upon the broad principle of refusing any further grant to Ireland, he should have his (Mr. Christopher's) support. He ventured to predict, also, that we should have the right hon. Baronet detailing the same condition of the people in many of the southern parts of England. Anticipating such a state of things, was it right to ask the House to break through the principle which he understood was established when they granted a sum of money for the relief of Irish distress, and tax the overtaxed people of England? In reality the condition of the people of England was beset with greater difficulties than the Irish. The House should recollect that the people of Ireland paid no assessed taxes. They had no income-tax; whilst in some districts in England the poor-rates were heavier than they were in the most distressed parts of Ireland. He hoped the House would come to the resolution that the people of Ireland should in future be compelled to support their own poor.

Mr. F. FRENCH said, that, notwithstanding the strong language of the hon. Member for Lincolnshire (Mr. Christopher), the Imperial Parliament would always be ready, if necessary, to make advances from time to time for the relief of the people of Ireland. He thanked the right hon. Baronet (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) for his sympathy with the western parts of Ireland; but begged to tell him that it was the Government's present specific, the poor-law, which was destroying the farmer, demoralising the peasantry, annihilating the property of the landlords, and which would not leave a vestige of the capital expended by the Imperial Parliament in that country in improvements. He regretted the right hon. Baronet had followed the bad example of attacking the landlords of Ireland, and that he should have quoted for that purpose the report of Mr. Inspector Lang, a gentleman who had only been stationed at the Bantry union a month, and had, therefore, very naturally mistaken the circumstances under which the population was suffering. He considered Mr. Lang's opinion as worthless; and he thought the House would concur with him, when they referred to page 21 of the report, and saw what was the opinion of the vice-guardians of this very same union, with which they had had a long and intimate acquaintance. They stated that the rate was willingly paid by those who could pay; and that the landlords in some cases allowed the entire rate, to enable the tenants to pay. Was this, then, a fit district to select for the reprobation of its landlords? With regard to the credit taken by the right hon. Baronet for the beneficial operation of the poor-law during times of distress, he denied its justice altogether. He did not say the law aggravated the present distress; but he denied that it had ever alleviated it. Distress had visited Ireland; but, after it had been surmounted, it had never left the people in the condition they now were. The law had destroyed all the self-reliance of the people. The poor-law had universally failed in every portion of the kingdom which required it; and it was only in districts which did not require it that it stood at all. In the north of Ireland—the most prosperous part of the country—the poor-rate was far above the average of England. In the south of England the poor-rate was 1*s.* 10½*d.*; the average of all England was only 1*s.* 6½*d.* [Mr. Christopher: I pay 5*s.* 8*d.* in the pound.] Yes, you may; but I am right as to the average. But in Ireland there is one very material consideration always overlooked in these comparisons: the value of the land has very much decreased since those rates were laid, in consequence of the failure of the potato crop, and difficulty of getting rents at all. If, then, he paid 5*s.* 8*d.* in the pound, it was upon an imaginary pound. The 5*s.* 8*d.* was real, but the pound was altogether imaginary. With regard to the mortality in the workhouses, he would only, to place the melancholy fact in as striking a light as possible, state, that the deaths per week in the workhouses of Ireland equalled the mortality of London with its 2,000,000 of inhabitants. The following extract from the abovementioned report relative to the aid afforded to the distressed unions of the west of Ireland, relative to the Bantry union, and more particularly to the division of Kilcrohane in that union, states, that in the Kilcrohane divison—

> "Tenants running away, having sold their effects, and many overholding possession, rents unpaid, lands waste, the gentry and people equally distressed, famine increasing, and the taxation of the poor-rate crushing the few who endeavour to adhere to the land—everything in such a state as will render the country a desert.
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> "Within this year two rates have been struck in this division; one at 3*s.* 10*d.*; another (now in progress of collection) of 4*s.* 7*d.*; making 8*s.* 5*d.* in the pound, on a valuation based on a false foundation. It is true, a portion cannot be paid; for many have abandoned their lands in apprehension of utter ruin from its collection. A poor-rate was never calculated to meet a famine which arises from a total failure of the crop. The poor-rate falls upon the land, which, in such an event, produces nothing, and, by pressing on the resources of the ratepayers, whose sole support is derived from the soil, reduces all to one general state of pauperism. The land, waste and deteriorated, is again taxed: the landlord or immediate lessor, who receives no rent, is held responsible, and he suffers the cruel hardship of a double loss —the loss of rent, and being compelled to pay for what produces nothing. General ruin is impending; and, even supposing other proprietors to come in, they will labour under the same dire difficulties, as, by a rigid administration of a law to a famishing and populous country, you will ruin the inhabitants, extirpate the gentry, and desolate the land.
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> "From constant observation on the condition of the parties seeking admission to the workhouse, from our intercourse with those within the House, and from our frequent attendance, with the re-

lieving officers, at each of the electoral divisions, we are of opinion that the most extreme misery exists, as well in Kilcrohane as throughout the entire union, and that the condition of the whole people is immeasurably below what the most heartless would consider the lowest depths of wretchedness."

This was a fair description, not only of Kilcrohane, but of the entire of the west of Ireland. The present poor-law had had the effect of making the people rely on eleemosynary aid. The hon. Member concluded by objecting to the proposition, as one of temporary relief, since the only hope for Ireland was to stimulate her people to rely solely on their own energies and not on British alms.

SIR JOHN WALSH could not remember having been called upon to give a vote on any question which involved so many considerations of pain and difficulty as the subject now engaging the attention of the House. The right hon. Baronet the Chancellor of the Exchequer had strongly appealed to the feelings of the House, and had drawn an unexaggerated picture of the appalling distress which was now prevailing throughout the greater portion of Ireland. It was important for the House to recollect that they were not dealing with small portions or obscure quarters of that country, but to remember that, out of the 131 unions into which Ireland was divided, twenty had been pronounced, by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to be in a state of bankruptcy; that ten or eleven more of those unions were in a state bordering upon bankruptcy; and that there was reason to believe that nearly one-fourth of the population of the sister country were at this moment involved in absolute ruin. The question which the House was now dealing with was not a light one; and the proposition of the right hon. Baronet should receive the most deliberate consideration. The hon. Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. Christopher) had truly stated that England herself was in no flourishing state, that she could not boast of much prosperity, that we had a deficient revenue, and that many classes of our population were themselves involved in deep distress and suffering, and had to struggle against great privations. He (Sir J. Walsh) fully concurred in those remarks, and therefore felt that it was the bounden duty of the House, at this present moment, to exercise the strictest vigilance over every sixpence of the public money. In addition to the natural difficulties which beset this question of relief to the people of Ireland, it should not be forgotten that political agitators in this country practised the most incendiary arts to prevent the raising of money, even for the most legitimate purposes, and for the most absolute and imperative necessities of the Government, and that therefore the course of Ministers was made one of extreme difficulty. But he believed that if that House wished to preserve that moral force with the country which should enable them to come to the assistance of the Government, when assistance was really required—to proffer that support which might be thought absolutely necessary for the support of the State—it was imperative upon them to scrutinise a proposition of the kind now before them, and determine whether it was a just one. In that spirit he would ask whether, with the experience of past grants to Ireland, fresh in the memory, there was a reasonable ground for hope that the present grant was either wise in itself, or would prove beneficial to the people of that country? The eight millions, so bountifully voted by the House of Commons two years ago, had excited little gratitude in the people of Ireland; but that was because the money had conferred no benefit. He believed that Ireland was worse off, in consequence of the application of that money, and that it would be found that by the operation of that grant, society had been disorganised, and the habits of the population corrupted; that works had been scattered over the country, which, because they were uncompleted, were rather an injury than a benefit; and that the counties had been saddled with a lasting incumbrance of debt. Had the proposition of the lamented Lord G. Bentinck been carried into effect, even to a small extent—had a portion of the money which the noble Lord opposite raised been applied to the purposes of emigration, and to the removal of the pressure of a surplus population—he (Sir J. Walsh) believed that Ireland would have been in a much better condition than that in which the House now found it. What results did the Chancellor of the Exchequer anticipate from this measure? Did he expect that some six months hence, after 50,000*l.*, or four times 50,000*l.*, had been applied to the alleviation of Irish distress, that the condition of Ireland would be substantially improved? What was the probability of any substantial amelioration? The right hon. Baronet had described how, throughout large districts, landlords were ruined, how tenants had become bankrupt, how those who had formerly possessed or occupied land were now the recipients of relief. He had dwelt upon the numbers who had emigrated, and had referred to lands which were deprived even of their ordinary cultivation. Under these circumstances, and bearing in mind what this country had already done in the shape of relief to the people of Ireland, how could the House anticipate that the causes of Irish distress would be permanently removed? He begged earnestly to impress upon the attention of the House the communication to the Relief Commissioners from the guardians of the Bantry union. The state of things described in that communication was not confined to that district, but might be said to apply to the greater part of Ireland. Would not the House, by granting this sum, be making a fixed charge upon the resources of the country? and was there any hope that, by the means the House was asked to adopt, we should revive the industry of Ireland, and develop those resources in that country which were now either paralysed or lying dormant? The hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. P. Scrope) had failed to show the possibility, under the pressure of this poor-law, of developing the resources of the country. The resources of Ireland, in fact, were extinguished under this poor-law. How did Ireland at present stand with respect to that law? It was curious to observe, that throughout that country at this moment there were two poor-laws in operation. There was the poor-law of 1838, and the poor-law of 1847. It was a fault of the Legislature, that, adhering, as it appeared to do, to the provisions of the first law of 1838 as the groundwork of its legislation, not venturing to repeal or abrogate that law, it introduced by the law of 1847 a power virtually to set that of 1838 entirely aside, and that it vested the initiative in the hands and the arbitrary power of a body of commissioners who were deputed to carry into effect the law of applying the system of outdoor relief to certain unions. What had been the result of this system? The result had been exhibited in the returns which formed part of the appendix in the report—that in 23 unions of Ulster no outdoor relief was at present at all required. Seven unions in Munster were excepted from outdoor relief, and three in Leinster. Outdoor relief was established throughout Connaught. In a great portion of many of the provinces the system had obtained to a very limited extent. It was very important, in watching the working of this poor-law, to ascertain what effects it had produced where it had been in full operation. The poor-law of 1847 had only been pushed to its full extent—it had only borne its legitimate fruits in those provinces of Connaught and parts of Munster in which it was almost in universal operation. That was the answer to those Gentlemen who were so fond of drawing general averages, and then saying that the poor-rates in Ireland did not exceed those in force in England. To understand the Irish Poor Law properly, Ireland must be divided into two parts, and we must watch the separate effect of each of these two systems of poor-law upon those parts of the country respectively under their operation He (Sir J. Walsh) would repeat what had fallen from the hon. Member for Roscommon (Mr. F. French), that the valuation was taken upon what was the value of the property previous to the imposition of this poor-rate—previous to the failure of the potato crop—previous to the immense destruction of the value of all property which had followed since these events—and that, in point of fact, the valuation, which was in the first place a moderate valuation, and amounted to the rent of the farms, exceeded it now two-fold. The great evil to be guarded against in any system of poor-laws, was an undue pressure upon industry and enterprise. He felt compelled to designate the proposal of the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer as a miserable attempt to palliate a great evil; and if the right hon. Gentleman thought he could meet the march of this destructive disease of pauperism by a grant of 50,000*l.*, he was much mistaken. If the House once entered upon the path proposed, they would be compelled to take further steps in the same direction. If once they went the length of saying that they would support the destitution of Ireland, the whole pauper population of that country would be thrown upon the Imperial Treasury. He should like to hear from the Government whether, in the event of this grant being sanctioned by the House as a temporary expedient, they intended to make it a permanent source of relief? He should certainly like to know their general intentions with respect to these poor-laws. The right hon. Baronet the Secretary for Ireland (Sir W. Somerville) had the other night moved for a Committee; and he (Sir J. Walsh) must confess that he could not remember any Motion of similar importance to have been introduced in so meagre a shape, or with so little information bearing upon it. The right hon. Gentleman seemed merely to say, "You asked us for a Committee last year, which we refused; if we grant it this Session we will keep it in our own hands." At all events, the House well knew of what pliable materials Committees upstairs were made, and how ready they were to shelve any measure which the Government might not like to bring to light. The right hon. Baronet the Secretary of State for the Home Department had certainly been a little more explicit, and had, in answer to the questions of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northamptonshire (Mr. Stafford), afforded some index to the views of the Government. He (Sir J. Walsh) understood the right hon. Baronet (Sir G. Grey) to have said that the Government intended to adhere to the main provisions of the law as it at present existed, and to have intimated that, although as absolute perfection could not be expected in any system of poor-laws, the ingenuity of the Committee upstairs might possibly suggest some improvements in the details of the law as it at present stood, yet that in all its leading provisions the present law was to be adhered to, and maintained by the Government. Now, he (Sir J. Walsh) was convinced that unless great modifications were introduced into the working of the poor-law, and unless it was subjected to a thorough revision, to be approached by that House under the spirit and deep persuasion that it had committed great mistakes, and was called upon, in the first place, to reconstruct the remedial measure brought in two years ago, the law as it at present stood would pauperise the whole of that country. He felt persuaded that the pressure on the springs of industry, and the confiscation and destruction of property that now went on, were such that no reasonable hope could be entertained of any improvement in the state of Ireland whilst the present state of the law was allowed to continue. The right hon. Baronet the Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed to claim that some sort of progress towards a better state of things had been attained, because a considerable amount of devastation had occurred at some of these unions. He appeared to argue on the principle that matters must first come to their worst before they can grow any better. Having established, as he (Sir J. Walsh) thought, very clearly that matters in many unions had got as nearly to their worst as they could be, the right hon. Gentleman seemed to draw the inference that they must therefore be approaching to something very like an improvement. Now, he confessed he could not comprehend the force of the right hon. Baronet's reasoning; nor could he either understand by what process of argument the hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. P. Scrope) arrived at the conclusion that if they threw an amount of rating on the waste lands, and if that rating remained as a charge on these lands, supposing any cultivator to be enterprising enough to bring them again into a state of active fertility—he could not understand how it was possible that such a state of things could promote the improvement of Ireland. It appeared to him (Sir J. Walsh) quite certain that the present working of this law, constantly charging the land as it did with incumbrances which it was utterly impossible could be met, and charging it also, as it did, with those arrears of rate, after it was quite clear the land no longer grew crops, or had any live stock, or had any other means whatever of satisfying these rates, must have inevitably the tendency to suspend and destroy not only all present improvement, but also the possibility of any future good for that country. The more those arrears were suffered to run on, the more the pressure was constantly thrown upon those few better-circumstanced landlords or tenants who might still be able to struggle on; and to be quite certain that this process was one that was now constantly and rapidly going on and ruining Ireland, they had only to refer to the returns read by the right hon. Baronet in the course of his address. The case of Mrs. Bingham was a specimen illustrative of the general evil; and, he would ask, could the wit of man have devised anything more calculated to destroy and root out all prosperity—and not only that, but to render even the most ordinary cultivation of the land impossible—than the system entered upon and followed up by the Government, in consequence of the introduction of the fatal law that was now to be maintained without amelioration, or any intention on the part of the Government to modify its leading provisions? For what object, in point of fact, was the present grant asked for by the right hon. Baronet?

Why, only to bolster up this pernicious system, and to enable them to drag on a system that contained within itself not only the seeds of its own destruction, but which would obviously, if suffered to go on, destroy the country subjected to it. He (Sir J. Walsh) would refer to an instruction from the Home Office, dated 6th January last, and sent to Ireland. It was at page 30; and there the right hon. Gentleman stated that he approved of the steps the Commissioners were taking to enforce the collection of the outstanding rates, and requested that the guardians should make out their rate-books for new rates. And this was the way in which things were to go on—they were to continue to make new rates, whilst it was utterly impossible to collect the arrears upon the old ones. The right hon. Gentleman's instructions also stated, that it was essential for the local resources to take upon themselves exclusively the burden of supporting their own poor, and strongly inculcated the necessity for discouraging the unions from entertaining any expectations of any advances from the public treasury. And yet under the operation of this system they were doling out from the national funds just enough to keep the vicious system alive; whilst at the same time the Government did not adopt any measure sufficiently bold or comprehensive to give any hope of improvement or amelioration in any one of these unions. Could they ever think that this small pittance would go any length to prevent the paupers from becoming more numerous? Would it remove a single man from the poor-books, or diminish the pressure of the rates in the smallest degree? Evidently not; it was not even intended to do so; he believed hon. Gentlemen opposite disclaimed having any intention of producing such a result by the grant; and it was clear that while the existing law, on the one hand, was only pauperising the country by its continuance, on the other, by this miserable pittance of relief, they were only perpetuating and aggravating a fatal and destructive system. He (Sir J. Walsh) had a large stake, and took a warm interest, in the welfare and prosperity of Ireland, and could assure the Irish Members of that House, that although the resources of England were already very heavily taxed, and made it imperatively necessary that the strictest and most vigilant economy should be exercised with regard to the application of those resources, yet if any measure could be propounded to the English and Scotch Members of that House that really contained within itself the elements for effecting any permanent improvement in Ireland—if any grant of public money, however large it might be, could be shown to be calculated to lay a real foundation for the social well-being of the sister country—he (Sir J. Walsh) believed it would be cheerfully supported in that House as a wise measure of not only national policy, but also of prudent economy. His objection was not as to its amount, although he felt that England had already been fearfully taxed for the same purpose; but he felt confident that the only effect of granting more money would be temporarily to bolster up a system which must ultimately ruin the country for whose permanent benefit it was intended. On the other hand, if even a large grant of money were made the foundation of a new and better system, he, for one, should not oppose it, as he felt that it would not only be sound national policy, but a wise economy, to put affairs in Ireland on a footing different from that in which they stood at present. If any Gentleman on the opposite (the Ministerial) side of the House had such a measure to propose, it should have his warm support; but believing, as he did, that the present vote was a paltry expedient, a miserable sop thrown to the Irish Members to prevent them from urging on any reform in the poor-law, he should throw upon the Government the entire onus of granting it, and give it his most decided and strenuous opposition.

LORD E. HOWARD felt called upon, as the representative of a borough situated in a poor agricultural district, to make a few remarks on the important question before the House. It was with regret he had heard the opinion of the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Christopher), because he believed it expressed the opinion and policy of a large and influential party, which policy was, not to agree in a vote in favour of the proposition of the right hon. Baronet the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He (Lord E. Howard) regretted, when a moderate sum of money like the present sum was asked to provide for urgent distress in another part of the kingdom, that a strong objection should be raised to it. He was not ignorant of the quantity of money which this country had already voted for the relief of Ireland; but when they read the accounts of distress which appeared in the papers before the House, he thought it was impossible to deny what the Government asked. If hon. Gentlemen opposite intended to refuse the grant, on them must rest the blame and the consequences. He (Lord E. Howard) should never regret having opposed them to the utmost of his power for the purpose of relieving Irish distress. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Christopher) spoke of distress elsewhere, and referred to the distress existing in England which had filled the workhouses and gaols. He could not doubt the truth of those statements, and he regretted the necessity of having to admit their accuracy. No man was more sorry to see the industrious people of England in distress than himself; and no one would more encourage or more promote the virtue, the happiness, and the wellbeing of his fellow-countrymen. But when he found in the papers before the House the cries for relief of urgent distress; and further, that property in Ireland had done its utmost to relieve it but had failed; how could he refuse his support to a measure which was to afford help to the suffering? During the last two years there had been the deepest distress in Ireland. There had been a famine, and in addition diseases of the most appalling character; but at the same time there had been quiet and tranquillity. Though suffering the greatest distress, and experiencing all the horrors of disease, the Irish people under such circumstances were calm and tranquil. But then, might it not be supposed that this calm and tranquil feeling would not always exist? If the poor perishing people of Ireland were to see that hon. Members disregarded the request which Government made to subsidise their great distress, might they not say, " On the last occasion when distress overtook us—when our wives and children were dying of disease and hunger—and when, in some districts, there were hardly enough people left alive to bury the dead—we were quiet, and this is all we get by it. Now, however, as another period of distress has arrived, and we ask you for some small relief, which you refuse, can you ask us again to exhibit the same conduct as before, when it has proved of no use to us?" He did not wish the House to think he was advocating rebellion, or the exhibition of any other conduct than the Irish people had hitherto manifested under their sufferings. He should be sorry had any other line of conduct on their part been pursued; for he was satisfied the only result would have been an increased loss of life and suffering to the Irish people. In the remarks he had made, he only wished to show to hon. Gentlemen opposite, if their opposition to the vote proved effectual, what might possibly result from it. He (Lord E. Howard) was not going to enter into the details of the question, because he was aware there were many hon. Gentlemen present more competent to the task than himself. To them he left the matter, and for this additional reason, that he found it would be a difficult task if he felt inclined to do so, because it appeared that every hon. Gentleman who spoke on the subject, particularly those who came from Ireland (those hon. Gentlemen must excuse him for saying so), seemed all to entertain views widely differing from each other; and he (Lord E. Howard) must leave it to abler hands than himself to enter upon the turbulent waters of such a mass of hostile opinions. But it appeared to him that some blamed the Government because it assisted the people of Ireland; others censured it for assisting them too little; and others again found fault with their Irish policy in sundry and divers other respects; but he wished to remind all those hon. Members who were so ready to condemn the conduct of the Government, that the grant now under consideration was only intended as a temporary means of affording relief. The Government had, only the other night, asked for a Committee to investigate the subject of the Irish Poor Law; and was it unreasonable that the House should be asked in the meantime, until the result of that inquiry was attained, to grant the people of Ireland a certainly temporary, but still very necessary, measure of relief? He did not profess to be well versed in Irish affairs; but he had found, from the newspaper statements of the day, that charity was not uselessly thrown away upon the Irish people, as some persons seemed to imagine. They knew that when those individuals who had been most conspicuous in their acts of charity, and in the excellence of their mode of administering it (he meant the companions in religious belief of an hon. Gentleman whom he did not then see in the House—he alluded to one of the hon. Members for Leicester, a member of the Society of Friends)—when they went in a practical manner, and with the greatest generosity and self-sacrifice—in which respect they had also been laudably imitated by various other persons—they applied money for the relief of the Irish people in a manner that could not fail of ultimately conferring the greatest benefit upon that unfortunate country. It might be said by some, that it was of no use to relieve the Irish—the Irish could not relieve themselves—they were always begging and coming to the English people for money. Then, with respect to the labouring people themselves, where was to be found a harder working man than the Irish labourer, in this and in all other countries? He believed that whenever an Irishman had a fair chance of getting a fair day's wages for a fair day's work—whenever he could gain the means of supporting himself in the midst of his daily toil, he would be found to be as industrious and willing to work as the native of any other country. He was not an Irishman, and therefore he might be supposed to give an impartial opinion. He would say that neither an Irishman nor any other man had a chance of getting a fair day's wages for a fair day's work in Ireland; and the reason why Irishmen were so lazy in their own country was, because they were in such a state of poverty—really and truly they might be said to exist in a state of starvation. He had already intruded at greater length than he had at first intended, but he could not sit down without declaring that though he advocated relief for Irish distress, he did not wish to encourage idleness. He knew there was great distress in Ireland; he also knew there were great faults. Capital had been misapplied to a great extent; landlords had no means of doing what was required from them; some had been extravagant, and some reckless. But though he admitted that landlords had much to answer for, yet, speaking of the landlords of the day, he was not prepared to say how far it would be fair in this case to visit the sins of the fathers on the children. He trusted, however, that the landlords of the present day would derive a salutary lesson from the landlords of former days, and that the country would see, as they had in some instances seen, the landlords setting about a better system and a better example—by becoming residents in their own country, and employing labour for the benefit of the poorer inhabitants. He would say but little more, except humbly to entreat hon. Members on the opposite side of the House, before they opposed the proposition of Government, to consider what they were about to do. At present they had Ireland in a state of tranquillity—of slumbering tranquillity, but whose slumber might be disturbed if, by any large majority the proposition of the Government was rejected. He had approved of the proposal of Government to continue the Habeas Corpus Act for a limited period; but, he reminded hon. Gentlemen, that if they did anything which was likely to drive the people of Ireland to despair, it was not the continuance of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act which would suffice—everything would be thrown into confusion; and, without referring to higher motives which should actuate them, he would remind them that that confusion would not be subdued except at a far greater expense for additional troops, whose services the occasion would justify, than would be caused if the present vote were agreed to. He meant nothing harsh towards any hon. Members in his remarks, nor did he wish it to be understood that he thought hon. Members unfeeling, because from a mistaken though conscientious sense of duty they opposed the proposal for relief to Ireland. But he wished them to consider well before they pursued a course which might lead to such a result, so much to be regretted and deplored.

Mr. HUME was not sorry that he had given way to the noble Lord (Lord E. Howard) who had just sat down, because he would hold out his speech to the House and to the country as an example of that which had hitherto led the country astray, and what would, he apprehended, lead it still further astray. He had no doubt that the motives of the noble Lord were most humane, and that the distress in Ireland was as great as he said; but the question the House had to decide was, whether the principle on which they were called upon to vote this money was the principle that would benefit Ireland? He was sorry to hear the last part of the noble Lord's speech, where he said that if they did not give money to the Irish people they would rebel. But what did their experience teach them on that point? In the year 1847 they gave them seven millions of money, and they rebelled in 1848. He held that the doctrine announced by the noble Lord was founded upon the principle of communism; the principle of supplying the idle and lazy with money at the expense of the industrious. Need he add to that the proposal of his hon. Friend the Member for Stroud (Mr. P. Scrope)? It was adding to it Louis Blanc's principle of supplying money to create workshops. The House should cautiously take care what they were now about, for this was the commencement of a new system and of a new period, and he asked were they not to avail themselves of the benefits resulting from the experience of the past? No man felt more for the misgovernment of Ireland than he did —no man had oftener within the last thirty years raised his voice against the oppressive system pursued there; but all his advice to improve the country had been invariably set at nought. The practice of the Irish differing amongst themselves and of the Government fostering that difference—dividing the Irish party that they might control the whole—that had brought the country to the lamentable state in which it was now placed. He (Mr. Hume) was not one of those who would join in blaming the landlords of Ireland generally. He blamed some of the landlords of Ireland; but many of them were driven into their present position by the misgovernment of past ages, and it was not generous to charge them in the day of their calamity with all the evils that Ireland was suffering. [Lord EDWARD HOWARD dissented from the construction put upon a portion of his observations by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose.] He did not think he was attributing to the noble Lord (Lord E. Howard) anything he had not said. What he stated was, that the noble Lord had advised the House not to refuse this money in charity, because there was distress in Ireland, and if they did not relieve the distress they might be called upon for an additional number of troops. If he had mis-stated the expressions of the noble Lord, he did not mean to do it; but he protested against such a principle, as being certainly not likly to improve Ireland, but as being likely to bring Scotchmen and Englishmen into the same state. Was the principle of the State undertaking to feed the people a principle on which they ought to go?—and in considering that question let them not lose sight of the example they had in a neighbouring country, where, with the best intentions, no doubt, the public money was given to support the able and unemployed. He would put this question to the noble Lord: if the present advance was in order to relieve distress in Ireland, would it not be right to relieve all the distress in that country? He would tell the noble Lord that the whole revenue of the empire would not suffice for such a purpose. Let them now consider what it was Government proposed to do, and what were the circumstances which induced them to come to that House for more money. Looking at the amount of rates collected in Ireland, it would be found, from the papers in their hands, what the average for the whole of Ireland was. It was necessary to look at these matters before they gave away money in charity. They ought then to stimulate industry, and induce those people to provide for themselves. On no principle of government he had ever known, could he admit that the State were to feed the people. It was the people who should sustain the Government; and by the promotion of a system of good management amongst them, they could only hope for results favourable to the peace and comfort of the community. The noble Lord (Lord E. Howard) had alluded to the Quakers of this country, and to their praiseworthy and charitable exertions; but the Government were in a different position. Those men, out of their own pockets, much to their honour and credit, and to the credit of the country, came forward to do the work of charity; but the Members of that House were the stewards of the public, and could not deal with the money in their possession from humane motives as those individuals had dealt with their own. However, he did not object to the proposed grant because of its amount, but he objected to it on principle. He warned them, before they made up their minds to advance one single shilling under such circumstances, to consider to what an extent the system might proceed, not only in Ireland, but in Scotland and in England. He was not clear but that the time might arrive when many of their countrymen, both in the north and south, would be in a condition requiring assistance. If they were once to give way to the principle of humanity, the period might not be far distant when they would be called upon for a similar grant—and were the Government prepared for that? The principles on which they should desire to promote the welfare of the country forbade it. He asked the House, therefore, not to give one shilling to Her Majesty's Government for the purposes of charity. It was destroying the very individuals for whom they gave the money. He would ask those considerate Irishmen who had marked the progress of their money advances in Ireland, whether they would not concur in the statement he made, that the waste of ten millions of money in Ireland had deranged industry, and tended to make the distress of Ireland so extreme and lamentable? Let no more money be wasted at the expense of the public, entailing a permanent debt on the country, without conferring any benefit on Ireland. The first vote which they were asked to pass amounted to 50,000*l.*; and he remarked that he found a very curious paragraph in the paper before him. The Commissioners were, it appeared, to make an estimate of what advances the unions should require. If they were not able to collect the rates in a particular union, they were to present their estimate to the Government, and the Government were to come forward to aid them, without, in the meantime, having laid before the House one single measure for the permanent improvement of the country. When the vote of ten millions was proposed for Ireland, he protested against that vote unless the Government brought forward measures to remove those radical causes that had produced the misery of the country; and a promise was given that such measures would be introduced. He had concurred most cordially last year in giving adequate powers to the Government to maintain the peace of the country; but he did so under a promise from the Government that they would bring in meusures as speedily as possible radically to remove the evils that existed. He believed that they would have no rebellion. [Mr. J. O'CONNELL and other Irish Members: Hear!] Gentlemen were in a hurry in crying "hear;" he thought they should have in no country discontent, amounting to anything like rebellion, without some cause existing. He could show the causes that existed in Ireland, and, in fact, had often shown them to the House. Had Her Majesty's Ministers, he asked, fulfilled the promises they had made to the country, or sought to correct the vicious system that had led to the present lamentable state of Ireland? One Bill, indeed, had been brought in, but had been so cobbled and mutilated in its progress as to be of no use whatever. Had anything practical been done? He answered emphatically, no; and as long as they gave to a Ministry—he did not refer to one particular Ministry more than to another—measures of coercion and money, they never would have anything beneficial done for the country. They were now called upon to vote this 50,000*l.*, because it was said that certain portions of the people of Ireland were unable to support their own poor. What proof had they of that? He found, by the paper in his hand, that the average of the whole rate of Ireland during the last year was only 2*s.* 9*d.* in the pound; but in parishes in England the rate was higher in the last year than any rate in Ireland. In the parish in which he (Mr. Hume) lived, in Norfolk, the rates were 16*s.* 6*d.* in the pound; and the last quarter's rates was 4*s.* 6*d.* During the last year they had made advances to Ireland to the extent of 231,450*l.* Of that sum Ulster had received 6,000*l.* or 7,000*l.*, Munster 24,000*l.*, Leinster 7,000*l.*, and Connaught 184,000*l.* What did the rates amount to during that time? In Ulster the rating was 2*s.*, the expenditure 1*s.* 8*d.*, and the amount collected 1*s.* 10*d.* in the pound; in Munster 3*s.* 7½*d.* was the expenditure, the rating 3*s.* 3*d.*, and the difference was made up by the public money; in Leinster the expenditure was 2*s.* 4½*d.*, and the amount collected 2*s.* 1*d.*; in Connaught 5*s.* 8*d.* was the expenditure, and only 2*s.* 7*d.* had been contributed from the poor-rates, the rest being made up from the public money. Now, he asked the House to get the returns from Paisley, or many of the towns in England, and let them have them on the table before agreeing to this proposition of the Government. With such a light assessment, compared with what was paid in England, were they prepared to adopt such a vicious principle as thus giving money to maintain the poor? The hon. Gentleman the Member for Stroud (Mr. P. Scrope) had moved an Amendment which recommended that the money should be given, and employed for reproductive purposes—

MR. POULETT SCROPE: I beg the hon. Gentleman's pardon. I merely propose that the money should be lent, and not given.

MR. HUME: The hon. Gentleman asked that the money should be lent to employ the people; but on what security was it to be lent? They were told the land was worth nothing. If there was property that could be sold, he would say there was a fair claim for a loan; but otherwise, he would say it was giving the money. Let not his hon. Friend deceive himself into the belief that it was not giving the money; and the Government must know it was giving the money. He protested against giving that money, and would state to the House what ought to be done. They should negative the proposition of the Government, and to come to that they must first negative the proposition of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stroud (Mr. Poulett Scrope).

He believed the measure of the Government, if carried, would be injurious to Ireland, and would not produce the effect anticipated by its supporters. He should, therefore, oppose the proposition of the Government. No man wished better to Ireland than he (Mr. Hume) did; but one of the most dangerous proceedings would be to begin by voting 50,000*l.*, as now proposed. He was unwilling thus to waste the public money, without in any way remedying the existing evils.

Mr. STAFFORD praised the tone and temper of the speech of the noble Lord (Lord E. Howard); but before the noble Lord proceeded to pass such a severe censure on hon. Gentlemen on his side of the House, he should have recollected something of their former conduct in respect to the Irish Poor Law, when it came under discussion. It was then stated that this poor-law contained a fatal principle in some of its provisions. The principle on which the electoral divisions were to be divided was most important, and one on which the whole question of equitable taxation rested. When the Irish Poor Law was introduced, a clause was inserted, in the House of Lords, directing the Commissioners so to divide the country as to stimulate productive employment; but that, except in Ulster, had not been carried out; and it would be found that all measures of improvement —emigration, the sale of encumbered estates, or the question of relief from the public treasury—all hinged upon that one principle of the area of taxation. It was only fair for him to state to the House, from his knowledge of the districts referred to in the book that had been submitted to them, that so far from things having come to the worst, they would, in every succeeding year, if the present system were sanctioned, be under the absolute necessity, not only of repeating the grants from the public treasury, but each of such grants would be larger than the former. When money was first asked for Ireland, he had, at the risk of personal unpopularity, ventured to predict what would be the result. He had said that the money would evoke no gratitude and do no good. As men of business, let them look to the working of the present system in the province of Connaught. If they referred to one part of this book they would find the number of unions; in another part they would find the population of those unions; and he had been at the pains of adding up the population of those unions. They were aware that thirty-one unions were in a state of great difficulty; and twenty unions were in a state of absolute bankruptcy. The population of those twenty unions, according to the last census return, amounted to one and a half million of people; and the result of the working of the present system was that the province was laid desolate, and out of the population one and a half million were in a state of bankruptcy, and another half-million were likely to follow. With reference to the Motion that had been made a few nights previous, for the appointment of a Committee, although on some points it might be necessary to have inquiries made, still the urgency of the occasion was one that ought not to be met by the mere appointment of a Committee: this was not a case to be met by this instalment of relief. It might be said that 50,000*l.* was a very small sum to be granted; and those hon. Members who supported the proposition of the Government had very strong grounds in the appeal made to humanity upon the present occasion, and which, he must say, gave him the greatest possible difficulty to resist. He would, however, ask hon. Members who made use of that appeal, to consider the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who had stated fairly and openly that this would be by no means the last grant for which he would have to apply during the present Session. The phrase, "Let the property of Ireland support the poverty of Ireland," was one very easy to be used, and when first used in the House produced cheers. But that phrase produced no cheers now, because hon. Members were beginning to suspect its meaning. He wanted to know how it was, according to that principle, that in the unions of the west of Ireland, the poverty of Ireland, dammed up by artificial barriers, overleaped its boundaries and found its way into the adjoining province, or came to the Consolidated Fund for relief? It was quite certain that the rates of the province of Ulster were not very large; but they joined the province of Connaught to Ulster, and then said, "Look at the average." If the hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume) had had an opportunity during his severer studies of attending to the lighter literature of the day, he would find in one of the publications which were popular, the case of an elderly gentleman proposing to a young lady: he was seventy, she was twenty. The lady objected on the score of age; upon which he replied, "Yes, but when we are united we shall be one. I am seventy, you are twenty; united ages, ninety; average, forty-five." By a forcible union of the province of Ulster with Connaught a similar result to this was produced. If hon. Members would refer to the 10th page of the report, relating to the aid afforded to the distressed unions in the west of Ireland, he would find that in the electoral division of Clare Island the poundage on one year's expenditure was 41*s.* 9½*d.* in the pound; Achill, 37*s.* 8¾*d.*; in Islandeadey, 20*s.* 8¼*d.*; in Louisburg, 20*s.* 8¼*d.* in the pound; and it surely would be hard upon those ratepayers to hear that in the unions of Belfast and Londonderry the rate was only 5*d.* in the pound. With respect to the Encumbered Estates Bill, he would ask hon. Members who had spoken of the working of that law, and of its ineffectiveness, who would go and invest their money in any of the unions of Connaught? One gentleman had informed him that he had a hundred acres of as fine grazing land as any in the country; he had also 400*l.* in the bank. He said that his first view was to invest this money in the purchase of stock for this grazing land; but, understanding that there was a heavy rate in arrear upon the land, and that the moment he had invested his capital in stock for that land that stock would be seized for the rate, he found it more convenient to invest his money in the Three per Cents, and wait for a better time, or live upon a part of the capital and the whole of the interest, so long as he was able to keep body and soul together. There was not a single district of the whole of those unions that was not liable to enormous rates; and the moment any stock was put upon the land, or any corn had arrived at maturity, to a certainty it would be all seized for the rates. He had warned them previously how it would be, and now it had come to pass. First of all, the former Parliamentary grant had failed, and that was dead-lock No. 1; then the British Association money failed, and that was dead-lock No. 2; and now the grant proposed by the right hon. Baronet (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) would also fail, and that would be dead-lock No. 3. He called upon the House, therefore, in the very words of the hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume), to force on Ireland the necessity of maintaining its own poor. He was satisfied, on the principle of philanthropy towards Ireland, totally regardless for the present of the English constituency he represented—he was satisfied, on the general principle of finance, that the 50,000*l.* now proposed to be granted would leave Connaught more poor than she was at present. If he thought that the proposed grant of money would even leave Ireland where it was, he would have less scruples than he had; but he had no hesitation in saying that by every grant they only increased the misery and poverty of the country. He (Mr. Stafford) had resided for some months in every year, during the last fourteen years, in Ireland; he had watched over the working of the poor-law in one of the largest unions of Ireland—that of Limerick. He had devoted since the recess three days in every week to the examination of the operation of that law, and he told the House, as a result of his experience, that the area of taxation was at the root of all the evils connected with the working of the poor-law in Ireland. Let not the House consider these observations as undeserving of attention because they were brought forward by an independent Member. His interests were bound up with those of Ireland, and the conclusions to which he had arrived were the results of personal experience and inquiry. As a proof of the change of opinion which had taken place in Ireland, he would state that, having proposed at the Limerick board of guardians, two years ago, a resolution upon the subject of the area of taxation, the feeling of the guardians was so strong against him that he did not dare to bring it forward. In the month of October in the last year, however, he brought forward that same resolution, only more strongly worded, and the guardians, so far from resisting it, did not even comment upon it, and the resolution was passed by acclamation by the whole board. They said all their fears with respect to clearances were at end; it was impossible for the system of clearances to go on at a more awful rate than they were now going on; and they felt that when the country was a desert, the towns would become a ruin. It was quite clear that there must be some alteration in the area of taxation, and where necessary a rate in aid might be made. There must be some alteration of the system which prevented persons from improving their land, in consequence of the arbitrary increase of the assessment in such cases. Till alterations such as these were made, they might double the national debt, by payments to Ireland,

and at the end there would be nothing done, and they would not have even the commonest gratitude, because the people would not find the least benefit from the course they had pursued. This being the actual state of things, and this being the difficulty—either to seem to turn a deaf ear to the appeal of their suffering fellow-countrymen, or to sanction a principle which he believed to be a most vicious one—he again expressed his regret that the Government had not thought fit to meet Parliament with better measures than a vicious grant, and a dilatory Committee, to grapple with the evils of Ireland.

Sir W. SOMERVILLE said, he felt that his hon. Friend (Mr. Stafford) who had just sat down had been guilty of some little contradiction: for he had submitted that the pith of the whole law, and its improvement, depended on the settlement of the question of the area of taxation. Now, he (Sir W. Somerville) begged his hon. Friend to remember that the Government had separated those two questions—that the area of taxation had been separated from the other details of the Bill; that a Commission was appointed last year to enter into that particular part of the operation of the poor-law; that that Commission made a report; that that report was laid on the table of the House; and that, therefore, that vital part of the poor-law, which involved a very grave question, need not be submitted to the consideration of another Committee, but that it was ripe for the adoption of the House now, if the House conceived it right to adopt it. Therefore, so far as the area of taxation was concerned, that question might be considered settled. He fully believed the statements made by English Members with reference to the proposition of his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and he admitted that it was no doubt a painful thing for the Government to come down there and ask for the present grant. It was a painful position for the hon. Members for England or Ireland either to refuse a grant asked as this had been asked for, or to sanction a system which an hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stafford) had deemed vicious in principle, particularly after what had fallen from the right hon. Baronet the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that he would not undertake to say that he would not increase the grant now proposed at some future day. Now the House might turn and twist the question asked by the hon. Member for Radnorshire (Sir J. Walsh) as they pleased, but there was only one answer to that question, and that was—that this grant was necessary if the House wished to preserve the lives of the people. It might be painful to make it. The House might blame the Government, and say that they ought to have done this and that; but there was only one answer to the question, and he firmly believed that not one of the remedies proposed there that day—that not one of the remedies propounded on so many occasions by the hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. P. Scrope) would have prevented the present or any other Government from coming down and making a similar proposition with that now made, and ask this country to come forward and save the lives of the people in Ireland. He also thought that the hon. Member for Roscommon (Mr. French) was in error in attributing the present state of things to the poor-law. It seemed to be forgotten that Ireland at this moment was suffering under the greatest calamity which he (Sir W. Somerville) firmly believed had ever befallen any country in the world. They had there a population living upon the lowest character of food—the potato; and that food had now been destroyed for three consecutive years. How was that population to be supported? Where was the food to come from to supply that food which had been destroyed; or, if the food were supplied, where was the money to come from with which the population was to purchase it? Hon. Gentlemen seemed to think that such a calamity as this was to take place, and that the ordinary operations of society were to go on as heretofore—that the social machinery was to proceed as hitherto—that nothing was to clash, that the Government need not come down and propose grants, and that it was impossible, in fact, but that things must go on in their ordinary course, and no special remedy be applied. He begged of the House to consider the state of things in Ireland for a moment, and to remember that they could not remedy it all of a sudden. Do what they would, the process must be a long one. And until things took a better turn, and some change took place, if they did not step in with some temporary aid, as now proposed, the consequence would be, as he had already stated, a destruction of human life; and when that destruction had taken place, he knew, from his own knowledge of English character, and the feelings of hon. Members in that House, that they would blame themselves for having rejected the present proposal. Now, there had been two objections advanced to the course which his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer had thought proper to pursue. First of all, there was the objection of advancing any money at all, to which he had already alluded, and which he could not express surprise at; and then there was the objection of the hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. P. Scrope) who had said that the money ought to be lent, not given, and employed in reproductive operations. Now the question was, if they employed this money in reproductive operations, would they be able to meet the difficulty for which the money now asked, and hereafter to be asked, was required? His belief was, that if the House attempted to employ this money in a reproductive manner, it was not 50,000*l.* that would be asked, but 500,000*l.*—and from his knowledge of Ireland, he warned the House, and he entreated those who thought with the hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. P. Scrope), to pause before they mixed up relief to the destitute poor with the employment of pauper labour on great reproductive works. Now, he would just state this fact to the House, and allow hon. Members to deduce from it whatever argument they pleased. Under the Labour Rate Act, as it was called, there were at a certain period 700,000 ablebodied men in what might be called the pay of the Government, because they received daily wages from the money voted for that purpose by the generosity of that House; but at no period had there been more than 65,800 persons receiving relief from the poor-laws. Now, if the House were to connect the poor-laws with the reproductive employment of pauper labour, they would treble the number of 65,000 persons under their relief plans. Then his hon. Friend had said that reproductive labour prevented demoralisation; but his (Sir W. Somerville's) belief was, that if they employed pauper labour on reproductive works, they would demoralise the paupers to ten times the extent. Besides, there was something repulsive in extracting from a pauper his labour, which was to produce a large return; and then, as compensation for his labour, giving him nothing but his daily rations. This was a system that would not be tolerated. It would be considered more unfair than the present system, and he was perfectly convinced, as he had already said, it would be more demoralising; and, therefore, so far as the proposition of the hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. P. Scrope) was concerned, whatever the House might do with the main question now proposed, he hoped that, so far as any proposition of lending money was concerned, in order that it mght be employed in reproductive labour, it would not meet with the sanction of the House. The hon. Member for Stroud had alluded, in the course of his address, to many other topics. He had alluded to a correspondence which had lately taken place between the Under Secretary of State in Ireland and the Marquess of Sligo, with reference to the Westport union; and he had quoted a passage from a statement made by the Under Secretary, in which an average was taken of the rate collected in the Westport union, that average being stated at a very small amount. He (Sir W. Somerville) wished to take that opportunity of stating, in the same frank manner in which it had already been officially stated in Ireland, that there was an error in the return made by his hon. Friend, the Under Secretary for Ireland—that his hon. Friend immediately wrote to the Marquess of Sligo on discovering the error—that in the first instance he did not give credit for a further payment of rates than to the amount of 7,000*l.*; but that when he discovered the error, he frankly acknowledged it to the Marquess of Sligo; and as his letter on the subject had not appeared in the papers, he (Sir W. Somerville) felt it right to make this statement to the House. Now, in his opinion, the hon. Members for Lincolnshire (Mr. Christopher), and Montrose (Mr. Hume), had not argued fairly when they alluded to the amount of rates paid in this country as compared with the amount paid in Ireland. It was very easy to speak of so much in the pound paid here and there, and it was very easy to strike averages; but he was greatly afraid, when they talked of so much in the pound, that that pound was a very imaginary thing, and that a large number of gentlemen in the west of Ireland did not get it. And then as regarded the inequalities of the rates, nothing was so fallacious as the founding of an argument on that. The expenditure for the province of Leinster had been 2*s.* 0¼*d.*, and in Ulster, 1*s.* 8¾*d.* Now, in these provinces, the burden on the poor could not be considered as oppressive; but in Ulster there was one union, that of Glenties, in Donegal, in which the expense was 9*s.* 10½*d.* in the pound—nearly one-half the valuation of the whole union; and if hon. Members looked at some of the other divisions they would find the disproportion still more glaring. In Munster the average was 3*s.* 7¼*d.*; in Kilrush it was 7*s.* 4*d.* in the pound. In Connaught the average expense was 5*s.* 8*d.* in the pound; but the expenses in the Westport union were on the average 14*s.* 1¾*d.* In Clare they were 36*s.* 7*d.* in the pound; and in the Clifden electoral division of the Clifden union the rate was 43*s.* 1*d.* in the pound. Then what was to be done? Suppose they were to adopt the proposition of the hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. P. Scrope), why, before his reproductive works produced anything, half the population would be dead. The hon. Member for Roscommon (Mr. French), who possessed feelings of the greatest humanity, had observed upon the great numbers that were upon the rate-books; but he ought to remember that if those numbers were not upon the rate-books, they would be in their graves. The same hon. Member had also observed, that the present state of things in Ireland was not new—that it had happened before; but that was a mistake. True it was that there had been partial failures of the crops in Ireland before, and that the charitable people of this country had then come forward to alleviate the distress thereby caused; but never before for three consecutive years did it happen that the whole of the produce throughout Ireland had totally and entirely failed. He had read that, about a century ago, in the year 1744 or 1745, there had been a total and entire destruction of the potato crop in Ireland. He knew not exactly what the population of the country was at that time, but it must have been small compared with what it was at present. It probably was about 2,000,000, and the calculation was, that 400,000 of the people died a death of famine in that year. Now, if that was the state of things at that time, and if since then there had not been a general failure of the potato crop until now, the House might form some judgment of what the result would be if there was no poor-law in Ireland, and no compulsory provision for the support of the destitute inhabitants of that country. He knew not that he could add anything to the statements already made by his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer in proof of the misery which existed in Ireland. He hoped that whatever the result of the general question might be, at all events the Amendment of the hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. P. Scrope), would not receive the assent of the House. He firmly believed that, take what ulterior measures they might—and it was a very difficult thing indeed to say what those measures ought to be—it was most necessary that measures of temporary relief and alleviation should now be passed. He believed that if the generosity of that House did not step in, there would be a loss of life in Ireland frightful to contemplate; and that if such a catastrophe happened, the Members of that House, and the British people out of doors, would deeply regret that they had offered any opposition to the Motion of his right hon. Friend, and that they had not come forward to stop and arrest the march of death in Ireland.

Mr. H. HERBERT felt, in common with many other hon. Members, and with the hon. Member for Northamptonshire (Mr. Stafford), that he had a right to complain of the conduct of Her Majesty's Government. He, however, came to this conclusion, that if the House should reject the proposition of the Government, it would be a sentence of death upon starving people. He believed that the distress which was detailed in the papers before the House arose, if not wholly, yet in a great degree, from the neglect of Her Majesty's Government, who had turned a deaf ear to every suggestion which had been made to them by the Gentlemen of the country, who had forewarned them of the fatal consequences of the system which they were pursuing. He begged to say, that he disclaimed any sympathy with those who were of opinion that there ought to be no poor-law in Ireland. He found in the union in which he resided, which he had constantly attended for the purpose of doing his duty, that, with two exceptions only, it had paid the largest amount of any union of Ireland. The average amount of the collection was 5*s.* 10*d.* in the pound. He need hardly say that was a fictitious pound—it did not find its way into the pockets of the landlords. If he looked to the other column before him, he found that in the two other unions there was a greater amount of taxation, but they were deeply in debt and not able to meet their liabilities. Now, the union of which he spoke had money of their own, therefore he did not call attention to a district which had no resources. But he complained that, contrary to the remonstrances which had been made on the subject of a real taxation, the Government had paralysed the exertions of the landed gentry and those who had endeavoured, like himself, to do their duty. He had, at the close of last year, himself, spent ten days, from morning till night, to get at a description of the property in the union, in order to get at a unity of action. What was the result? After ten days' severe labour, he found it impossible, from the adoption of the areal taxation, to do any thing, It ended like the reports of Her Majesty's Government, in a voluminous report on paper. The right hon. Secretary (Sir W. Somerville) told them that they had the report of the Boundary Commissioners. He (Mr. Herbert) did not complain of those gentlemen, but he complained that they had too many reports. For the last twenty years they had nothing but blue books and reports; and now the Government, instead of making up their minds, told them they were to have another Committee. It had been stated that the poor-law in Ireland was looked on with detestation by all parties. Now, with reference to that assertion, he would state one circumstance which had happened in his own union. A gentleman in proposing at the board some memorial, used some expressions indicating that he was an enemy to the poor-law. The chairman said he could not concur in any resolution, which, even by implication, made it clear that they were enemies to the poor-law. That sentiment was responded to by every gentleman present. While on the subject of taxation, he would add one word. It had been said that there was no argument more fallacious than that of comparing the amount of rates in England and Ireland. In Ireland the rate did not represent the state of the unions. He found that of eight unions, there was only one union in Munster where the average taxation was 3*s.* 5¼*d.* in the pound, whilst in Connaught it was only 2*s.* 7*d.* Therefore, if they judged by the amount of taxation, Munster was in the worse condition. In the union he was interested in, the expenditure was 5*s.* 10*d.* in the pound, and they did not ask for money! They only asked the Government to give them free scope and fair play. The country did not want a report, but some action. They did not require another blue book, but action on the part of the Executive.

MR. E. B. ROCHE would support the proposition of the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer, not because the right hon. Gentleman had suggested the best remedy that could be devised, but because it was the most immediate remedy at the present period. At the same time he could not shut out from his recollection that it was but a stop-gap. The hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume) had said that he would not give the public money to relieve the Irish people, though they were in a state of destitution, because the grant would be against the principles of political economy, and because Ireland had not hitherto been governed in a wise and statesmanlike manner. As, however, they were in a state of starvation, he (Mr. Roche) could not refuse to vote this 50,000*l.* The hon. Member for Northamptonshire (Mr. Stafford) recommended the reduction of the area of taxation; but he did not see how that would meet the difficulty in the administration of the poor-law, or how the difficulty, in respect of the twenty bankrupt unions would be disposed of. As the question had been raised, he must say that he doubted the efficacy of the hon. Gentleman's specific, and he hoped that the Committee upstairs would not adopt the suggestion without a long and serious inquiry into its probable effect. The hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. P. Scrope), on the other hand, insisted upon it that reproductive employment ought to be given, and the land sold where that was not done. But to make a sale, there must not only be a seller, but a buyer; and he must say that he did not believe that any man of property in Ireland would buy landed estates at five years' purchase on the rental. But even if the plans which had been proposed by private Members of the House could be carried out, they would not meet the pressing necessity of the moment; and, therefore, if the grant were refused, he would leave the House to bear the responsibility.

SIR G. GREY wished, before the question was put, to say a few words in reference to the charge brought against the Government by the hon. Member for Kerry (Mr. Herbert) for not having introduced a Bill with respect to the reduction of the area of the rateable districts. The House had heard from his right hon. Friend (Sir W. Somerville) near him, as well as from other Members, that nothing could have been easier than for the Government to come down to Parliament with a Bill for that purpose, and that the requisition of Government for more convenient boundaries might have been prepared and at once presented to Parliament. He wished it to be understood that to accomplish this object the Government did not contemplate the possibility of effecting a change in the poor-law by means of townland rating. They proposed merely to keep to the revision of the present existing districts, with the view to an improved arrangement in some of the southern and western districts. Previous inquiry was necessary for this purpose, so as to prevent similar inconvenience arising to that which had arisen, and which they were now called upon to consider. With respect to the Commissioners appointed for this purpose, he was glad to find that the names of the gentlemen appointed for this purpose last year gave general satisfaction, as well as the instructions as to the mode in which they were to conduct the inquiry. The utmost attention had been paid to the principal object of inquiry, which object was not the introduction of the townland principle of rating, but to consider whether they could not with advantage make reductions in the area of the unions which existed in some parts of Ireland. He thought, as was stated by his right hon. Friend (Sir W. Somerville) the other night on moving for the appointment of the Committee, that this subject would not come before that body, but that Commissioners were inquiring into the matter quite irrespective of the Committee. The first report of the Commissioners, which contained an investigation as to a small portion of the country, had already been presented, and it had been referred to the Poor Law Commissioners with the view of ascertaining whether the recommendations embodied in it might not at once be carried into operation. The present Act of Parliament would allow this to be done; it therefore would be a mere waste of time to introduce a new Bill to effect that object. Power was given to the Commissioners in the original Act to revise the extent of the unions; and under the amended Act, the 9th and 10th of Victoria, they were enabled to revise the boundaries of the unions without any further express authority for the purpose. The first report of the Commissioners had only recently reached the Government, and if the recommendations embodied in it met with the approbation of the Poor Law Commissioners and the Government, they would be carried into effect without delay. Under such circumstances, there would be no necessity for Government coming to Parliament for a Bill for the purpose alluded to. He (Sir G. Grey), therefore, did not think that the hon. Member for Northamptonshire (Mr. Stafford) had acted with his usual fairness and candour towards the Government, in requiring that this subject should be referred to the Committee. It was out of all question resorting to townland areas. The number of the present electoral districts was 2,090, while the number of townlands was upwards of 7,000. No doubt there might be some townlands belonging to individuals in which there was no pauperism; but if, in consequence of this circumstance, this principle of rating was adopted, there would be great districts in Ireland which would be perfectly overwhelmed with poverty. He would say no more with regard to this branch of the subject. With respect to the proposed vote, he wished to say a few words in justice to the Irish Government. It was brought forward with the view of averting starvation from the pauperised unions, and it was brought forward at a moment, and this sum was asked for, under very different circumstances from those which existed when they asked for the first grant. At that time it was said, and very justly, that they were paying a large amount of poor-rates in England, a considerable portion of which was devoted to the relief of the destitute Irish in this country, but that the amount of the poor-rate collected in Ireland was very small. At that period the whole amount of the poor-rate collected in Ireland was 300,000*l.*, while, during the last year, not less than 1,600,000*l.* was collected. He did not, then, think that it could now be said with justice that the Irish proprietors endeavoured to avoid the charge of the burden of supporting the poverty of Ireland out of the property of that country. He believed, whatever arreas of local taxes might exist in the west of Ireland, that they had arisen from the peculiar circumstances of the last few years; and that the extent of pauperism was such as to require additional aid. It had been stated by his right hon. Friend (Sir W. Somerville) that some years ago 400,000 persons, out of a population of 2,000,000, were allowed to perish from starvation in Ireland, and that the then Irish Parliament took no other steps than to pass an Act to secure the payment of arrears of rent, and did nothing for the relief of the people. He was glad that a different state of feeling existed now, and he believed that the House would take upon itself a very heavy responsibility, if they rejected this vote after a knowledge of the circumstances of the case, being aware that rates were being collected, and that they would be enforced on those able to pay them. Circulars directing strict attention to be paid to this had been addressed by the Government to the inspectors appointed under the Irish Poor Law, and he had no doubt as to the instructions being attended to. Under these circumstances he trusted that the House would not withhold the grant.

MR. H. HERBERT, in explanation, said, that he had not declared that he was an advocate for townland areas. He had alluded chiefly to his own union.

SIR J. GRAHAM observed, that he could assure the Committee that he had listened to the discussion with great interest, and it was with some difficulty that he had arrived at a conclusion as to the vote which he should give. From the opinion of the House, expressed in the discussion which took place the other night on the Sessional Orders, it appeared that brevity was to be the future rule for the speeches in their debates. He, therefore, would at once get rid of all extraneous matters. He would not go into a discussion on the provisions of the Irish Poor Law; nor would he enter into the question of the area of taxation; nor would he advert to those matters which yesterday had been referred to a Select Committee. He would strictly confine himself to the two questions which were then immediately before them. The first question was the Amendment of the hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. P. Scrope), to the effect that if any money was voted on the present occasion, it should be in the shape of a loan. He distinctly differed from the hon. Gentleman as to his first proposition. He was extremely jealous, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, of the relations of debtor and creditor between England and Ireland. He would rather give a grant to double the amount than a smaller sum as a loan which was not likely to be repaid, or which was to be recovered by a process quite inconsistent, as he (Sir J. Graham) thought, with the peace of Ireland, and dangerous to the best interests of the country. He firmly believed that it would be altogether impossible to reclaim the money; and it would be only loading Ireland with burdens in addition to those which she was now found unable to pay. On this ground he would much rather consent to a grant than to a loan. The second proposition of the hon. Member was, that the sum to be advanced should be laid out in reproductive employment. He thought that the arguments of the hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume) were irresistible on this point. He thought that the principle had been tried, not far from home, in the recent attempt to establish national workshops, and which had been a signal failure. He, therefore, was strongly opposed to any proposition of the kind. He now came to the proposition of the Government, and his vote would be determined by the circumstances stated by two Irish Members. In the first place, he agreed with the hon. Member for Kerry (Mr. H. Herbert), that this was a most important decision which they were about to come to. He had looked into the report which was presented yesterday, as to the state of the distressed unions in the west of Ireland, and which embodied the suggestions of the Poor Law Commissioners. He found it there stated, that of the advances made in these unions from October, 1847, to July last year, 256,000*l.* was raised by charitable contributions; and when that sum was expended, 132,000*l.* had been given by the Government out of monies placed at their disposal by Parliament; and the Poor Law Commissioners—

> "Report that without this timely aid it is probable that not less than 200,000 persons would have perished last year for want of food in the distressed districts."

They went on to state, that the destitution arising from the failure of the potato crop last year was greater and more decisive than that which prevailed in 1847; and it adds—

> "It must be expected that the charge upon these distressed unions for the relief of the poor during the present season will again exceed the amount of rates which, in their present exhausted state, it will be possible to collect."

It appeared, then, that if no advance was made, the case must be hopeless, and the consequences must be that a large number of the people must perish from starvation. He therefore agreed with the hon. Member for Kerry (Mr. H. Herbert), that the refusal of the vote at that moment on the part of the House, would be equivalent to passing a sentence of death on multitudes of people. He knew that the English Members objected to grants of this kind, and that they were urged on the subject by their constituents; but he was sure when they made up their minds, if they did not regard the report before them as a false statement of the facts of the case, that he should not misrepresent his humane feelings and the Christian principles of the British people, when he expressed his conviction that they would accede to the proposition of the Government. With respect, therefore, to the grant of money, as this was only a temporary measure, he should give it his support. In saying this, he trusted, however, that there was no chance of another vote of this description. He regarded it as the last. ["Oh, oh!"] He repeated, he gave his assent to the vote distinctly on the understanding that this was the last vote of the kind. He was clearly of opinion that the time had arrived when the Government must carefully review the whole subject of local taxation in Ireland, and that they would soon come forward with a proposition, not only with reference to this, but to many other local taxes, and submit to our consideration a comprehensive settlement. Looking to all the circumstances of Ireland, considering that the Irish people paid no property tax, that they paid no assessed taxes—that with reference to the excise they were exempted from some duties, and also that the tax upon spirits was lower there even than in Scotland; and that with respect to tithes, a few years ago, there had been a remission—perhaps made improvidently—to the landlords to the amount of 120,000*l.* a year; he felt, that if taxes were to be levied for local purposes, the collection of the rate in aid should be made in Ireland. But as to the form of a measure of the description which he had alluded to, it was necessary that it should be undertaken by the Executive Government; and it was also necessary that they should have time to prepare a measure of this magnitude. It appeared from the discussion of this morning—if they were not aware of the circumstance before—that the time had arrived when a vote of this kind, a mere temporary expedient to meet a permanent evil, was no longer to be expected from that House. He trusted and believed that Her Majesty's Government would take a comprehensive view of the whole circumstances of local taxation in Ireland, and would deal with the subject in a manner worthy of an Executive Government. He had had some difficulty in making up his mind, but after the fullest consideration of the subject, he should vote against the Amendment of the hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. P. Scrope); and, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, he could not refrain from giving his support to the proposition of the Government.

Mr. **FAGAN** said, that he concurred in opinion with the right hon. Baronet who had just sat down, that that was not the occasion to discuss the poor-law. He would, therefore, not follow his hon. Friend the Member for Kerry (Mr. Herbert), nor the Member for Northamptonshire (Mr. Stafford) into that difficult question, nor would he discuss with them the area of taxation project. He admitted that the opinion of the hon. Member for Northamptonshire was entitled to great weight on that question, by reason of his experience as a poor-law guardian; but still, when the proper time came, he (Mr. Fagan) was not afraid to enter into the discussion. He was connected with the oldest union in Ireland, and being a guardian since that union was formed, he felt himself competent to express an opinion on the point to which the hon. Member attached so much importance. But the present question was, whether the population of twenty-one unions should be saved from starvation by the vote of this House; and to that he should direct his attention. He regretted his hon. Friend the Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume) should feel it consistent with his duty to vote against the proposition of Her Majesty's Government. He did not know whether the hon. Gentleman was connected by property or otherwise with Ireland, or whether he was connected by property with the West Indies; but he asked him whether he divided the House last year on the vote for the West Indies? That vote was for increasing labour in those colonies; the vote of to-night was to save a whole population from starvation; and yet the hon. Member allowed the one to pass without resistance, and now strenuously opposed the other. The hon. Member was a Scotchman. Did he come annually to that House and oppose the vote of 14,000*l.* for the Scotch fisheries? He was a long time in that House; did he oppose the vote for the Caledonian Canal? [Mr. Hume: I did.] Did he oppose the vote for Perth Harbour? Did he oppose the votes for the making of bridges and roads in his own country? The hon. Member instituted a comparison between the amount of poor-rate paid in England and in Ireland. The poor-rate in England amounted sometimes to over 5,000,000*l.* a year on a valuation of 67,000,000*l.* The rate in Ireland last year amounted to near 2,000,000*l.* on a valuation of 13,000,000*l.* Was it just, then, to institute any comparison between them? or if instituted, was not the balance fairly in favour of Ireland? The right hon. Baronet the Member for Ripon (Sir James Graham) brought back the House to the consideration of the real question before the House, namely, the Amendment of the hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. P. Scrope). He (Mr. Fagan) had on more than one occasion in that House vindicated the benevolent motives which influenced the hon. Member in the part he took in reference to Ireland, and he solicited him whenever he felt it his duty to bring the negligent or oppressive landlord before that House; but he must say that his Amendment to the proposition of the Government was not consonant with the motives for which he (Mr. Fagan) and the people of Ireland gave him credit. There was no person who heard the statement made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or who had read the paper on the distress in the west of Ireland, now in the hands of the House, but must see how utterly impossible it was that repayment of any loan now made to any one of the twenty-one unions for which it was intended could ever be made. The hon. Member for Stroud spoke of the Westport union. Did he know that in one division in that union the expenditure for the destitute for one year was 41*s.* in the pound? Did he expect that any aid given now to our electoral divisions would ever be repaid? Those twenty-one unions now owed a debt of 123,985*l.*, independent of their current engagements. Well, they had now quite enough to do to pay that debt, without repaying any money now given by that House. The union of Clifden, one of those to which assistance will be given, had last year nearly 86 per cent of its population on the poor's-rates, and this year 63. Did the hon. Member think that Clifden union would ever be able to repay the money that Government might allocate to it? He would draw the attention of the House to nine unions of the twenty-one to show their condition, and he would then ask, could they repay any money that was given them? In Westport, the electoral division of Achill was valued at 9*d.* an acre; the population was as three to every 1*l.* of valuation, and the population to every square mile of crops, before the failure of the potatoes, was 10,240. In Clare Island division, the valuation was 2*s.* an acre, the ratio of population four to one, and the population was 7,040 to the square mile of crops; and so in rather a less degree with the unions of Ballina, Castlebar, Ballinrobe, Gallwey, Clifden, Scariff, Kenmare and Bantry. How was it possible that the properties on these unions could repay the grant, or be sold for its repayment? In his opinion even the repayments of loans under the Labour Rate Act, or the Temporary Relief Act, could not be enforced from these unions. The hon. Member spoke of employment. Now that was good as a principle; but the question now was, to save the lives of the people, and mere reproductive employment with a few thousands could never effect that object. The hon. Member for Roscommon (Mr. F. French) expressed his gratitude to the Government, and yet he objected to their proposition, and he went on to attack the poor-law, attributing the distress to that law instead of to the famine. In the same manner the hon. Baronet the Member for Radnorshire (Sir John Walsh) opposed the vote, and yet he drew a frightful description of the electoral division of Kilcrohane, in the Bantry union, of which the inspector had thus written—

> "That the condition of the whole people is immeasurably below what the most heartless would consider the lowest depths of wretchedness."

He would now come to the proposition of the Government. He confessed he considered the vote quite inadequate to the purpose. He estimated the demand for the twenty-one unions for the next twelve months was 568,829*l.*, and the largest amount of rate that could be raised was estimated at 293,481*l.*, therefore there would be 295,348*l.* to be provided for twenty-one unions from extraneous resources. The Government proposed to give but 230,000*l.* It was clear then that even for the twenty-one unions that would not be sufficient. But the Government, in the coming spring and summer, would not be able to confine themselves to these unions. The British Association last year granted 236,487*l.* to thirty-five unions in addition to the aid given by Government—one of these unions not in the list of twenty-one he knew would require aid that year—he meant Skibbereen: that union got 12,000*l.* from the association last year, and it would require at least as much this year from the Government now that the resources of the association were exhausted. He spoke disinterestedly on this question, for his union required no such aid. Fifteen out of the twenty-one unions were in Connaught, a part of Ireland with which he had no connexion or no knowledge, yet he felt it his duty to support the proposition of the Government; at the same time that he was convinced more unions would have to be relieved, and the grant made larger; and he was glad it was the intention of Her Majesty's Ministers to propose a further vote if found necessary.

MR. DISRAELI: Sir, I rise to make a suggestion to the Government, which I do not despair they will accede to, and it is, that they will not on this occasion call upon the House to give a vote. I think this is an instance in which the House has not enjoyed that opportunity for consideration which is requisite on so important an occasion; and even if it were only to avoid the inconvenience of an adjourned debate, I should be glad if the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) would rise and appoint another day for the discussion of this question. I cannot agree, myself, in the belief expressed by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Ripon (Sir J. Graham), that this is the last vote that we shall be called upon to give on this subject. The right hon. Gentleman has qualified that conviction, because he says that he has no doubt Her Majesty's Government are prepared to bring forward a comprehensive measure on the subject of local taxation in Ireland, and indeed upon other Irish subjects, and it would, therefore, be extremely agreeable to this (the Opposition) side of the House to hear from Her Majesty's Government that such is their intention. If Her Majesty's Government would come forward and say, "This is really only a solitary vote, and if you accede to it we are prepared to call your immediate consideration to a comprehensive measure which we have matured, and which will render it unnecessary for us to apply to the House for further votes of this description," no doubt it would very much influence the conduct of hon. Members in giving their votes; but I have not heard any intimation of that kind from any Member of Her Majesty's Government, and, indeed, I collected from what I did hear an inference very much the reverse. But if that be the intention of Her Majesty's Government, and if they would so frame the vote that the House could clearly understand that this is the only vote of the kind about to be taken, and that a measure is about to be brought forward which will render unnecessary any future appeal of this kind, I have no doubt we should come to a satisfactory conclusion. But we must recollect that the only question now under consideration is put before us by Her Majesty's Ministers, and not by that distinguished Member — I will not say of the Opposition—but of the House of Commons—who has given us his opinion on the subject. We are called upon to grant a vote which is to support a population amounting to 2,000,000, and that vote is of a very diminutive amount compared with the population. No one can suppose that when we deal with those 31 unions, two-thirds of which are in a state of bankruptcy, and which are occupied by a million and a half of human beings, that the sum of 50,000*l.* can be of any efficiency, unless it be coupled with that subsequent legislation of a comprehensive character which it has been intimated to the House may be adopted. Sir, it is difficult in questions of this kind to resist the appeals that have been made to the House by the Members of Her Majesty's Government; but these appeals are also a reason why the House should not be taken by surprise in questions of this kind. The very papers in our hands have been there only a few hours; but the most remarkable thing is, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer founds his case upon manuscript information. And that is another reason why some delay should take place—that we should at least have that manuscript information printed and circulated and considered. Besides, Sir, we must always recollect that a Minister is inclined to make appeals to the House in questions of apparent exigency which it is, perhaps, rash on the part of independent Members too easily to accede to. It is not a year ago since we heard Her Majesty's Ministers making appeals of a similar description with reference to a proposal very much to increase the income-tax. According to the solemn declarations of Ministers at that time, the security of the nation and the maintenance of public credit depended upon our acceding to that proposition. Fortunately, we did not accede to it; and today we have received our reward, for the Chancellor of the Exchequer has told us that the revenue of the country is prospering extremely, notwithstanding we did not accede to his proposition. Considering that this proposition for a vote of 50,000*l.* is necessarily and avowedly on the part of the Government but the first of a series of similar grants; that it is a question of magnitude, because it really is whether the people of England are to pay, not only their own poor-rates, but the Irish poor-rates too — considering also that the printed information has been in our hands only a few hours—and I will honestly and frankly admit that I have not given it that consideration which I could desire, for the details are complicated, and already I have seen many which require elucidation—considering, also, that the case of the Minister who introduced the measure was founded on manuscript information, which he himself admitted had been received so very recently that he had not had the opportunity of circulating it amongst hon. Members—considering, also, that one of the most important supporters of the project of the Government supports it only because he assumes that a comprehensive measure is about to be introduced with respect to the local taxation of Ireland, without which, he confesses his vote would be quite unjustifiable—and that we have received no intimation from Her Majesty's Government that this comprehensive measure is really in preparation—I think I am not asking too much from the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) when I express my hope that he will not call upon the House thus suddenly to vote upon this important subject, but that he will appoint an early day for our future consideration of the measure which has been brought before us to-day.

Lord JOHN RUSSELL said, that the considerations which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Disraeli), who had just spoken, submitted to the House, as to the proposition being new, and as to the papers having been only lately in the hands of Members, and there being naturally therefore some doubt upon the question, were undoubtedly reasons why the further consideration of this vote should be postponed. On the other hand, he (Lord J. Russell) thought it was the bounden duty of Her Majesty's Government, in accordance with the Treasury Minute, dated Jan. 16, to lose no time, so soon as Parliament should have assembled, in laying before the House of Commons what they had done, and what they proposed to do. Otherwise they would have been placed under the necessity of refusing any grant or loan in Ireland, thereby exposing the distressed millions in that country to great loss of life; or they must have incurred the responsibility of granting the public money during the sitting of Parliament, without coming to that House for authority. With respect to the subject itself, he thought the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire (Mr. Disraeli) had hardly stated the case fairly for Ireland, nor fairly for others, when he said that the question was, whether the people of England were to pay the poor-rates of Ireland in addition to their own. In the year 1822, there was a loss of food in Ireland, although not so general as that which had occurred in other years; and in that year the House consented to both a loan and a grant, for the sake of the starving people. No poor-rates then existed. In 1846, propositions of the same kind were made at the commencement of the Session for grants and for loans; and, during the course of the Session, the total amount was frequently referred to, and stated as a proof that the Government and Parliament were not indifferent to the distress in Ireland. At that period there was a very limited poor-law, which only gave relief to the destitute within the workhouse, thereby excluding all outdoor relief. In that case likewise—in 1846 as well as in 1822—the grants were consented to, and no such reproach was uttered as that which was now made. But when the Irish representatives had given, with others, their consent to a law under which 1,600,000*l.* had been raised for poor-rates, then hon. Gentlemen turned round in this particular year and said, "Nothing is done for Ireland—our poor-rates are paid by us, and, in addition, we have to pay the Irish poor-rates also;" thus casting that reproach, not when Ireland really paid nothing for the support of her own poor, but when there was a poor-law in the country, under which the amount he had stated had been collected. Adverting now to those comprehensive views which had been alluded to by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Disraeli), he could only say that he could enter into no such pledge as that which the hon. Gentleman wished. Neither could he say that this would be the last grant that would be proposed on this account. Nor would he say that a comprehensive measure was now prepared by which he could do away with the necessity for any further grant of this kind. He should regard it as exceedingly wrong, if circumstances of great emergency should arise; if the question, for example, should arise whether 200,000 people should be allowed to starve, or the Government should come down and ask for a grant to save them from famine. Upon that subject, therefore, he disagreed with the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire. He would not say that a sense of public duty might not induce him to ask for such a grant at some future time. Neither would he say that a measure was now prepared by which all grants of such a kind would be rendered unnecessary. But this he would say, that, having heard many propositions made upon the subject of Irish poor-laws, and having many measures urged upon him within the last two years, which he had been reproached for not accepting, it turned out in many instances that the authors themselves of these very propositions had entirely given up and abandoned them. Such being the case, Her Majesty's Government having deliberated upon what, as they conceived, were the best amendments that could be made in the Irish Poor Law, had considered also that if such amendments should be made, other consequences would follow, which would bear upon the rating of property in Ireland; and, therefore, when the Poor Law Committee met, he should be prepared to state his views and opinions upon that subject fairly to the Committee. He would not say that those views and opinions might not be modified by the opinions of Gentlemen who were representatives of Ireland; and who, although he might be as well acquainted as they with the general principles of a poor-law, were better versed than he could pretend to be in the mode in which the poor-law had worked in certain districts in Ireland, and also how particular provisions of that law would locally operate. There could be no more difficult subject than a poor-law in any country. Various amendments had taken place in the poor-law of England from its first enactment, in the 43rd of Elizabeth, down to the alterations in the Act passed some fifteen years ago. What were difficulties, then, attending this kind of legislation, even in a flourishing and wealthy country, must certainly be still greater when attending the introduction of a poor-law into Ireland—a country to which it was new, where the machinery was hardly fit for its proper working, and, above all, where property had never before been subjected to its operation. He would not say that he was so possessed in opinion with respect to all the details of that poor-law, as to be prepared to make a proposition to the House for its amendment, and to say that nothing but that proposition should be adopted. He did not pretend to any such thing. When the Committee met he should be prepared, either with the consent and approbation of the Committee, or according to convictions of his own, notwithstanding the opinions of the Committee, to state to the House what he thought it would be advisable to do. He could say no more than he had now stated. He repeated, he thought this vote was necessary in order to prevent the direful effects of famine in the most distressed parts of Ireland. He thought that the poor-law, although it might have succeeded according to expectations in some parts of Ireland, had in other parts been found unequal to contend with the distress. The difficulties in making amendments in that law, and in the rating of property, were matters on which he would rather take the opinions of the Committee, and he was ready to postpone the further consideration of the vote for the present.

It was then arranged that the further consideration of the vote should be taken on the 9th instant.

House adjourned at Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, February 8, 1849.

MINUTES.] PUBLIC BILLS.—1ª Larceny Acts Amendment; Conveyance of Real Property Act Amendment.

PETITIONS PRESENTED. From the County of Berwick, for an Alteration in the Law for Granting Licenses to sell Spirits by Retail.—From Lewes, for the Adoption of Measures for the Suppression of Seduction and Prostitution.—From East Stonehouse, for Alterations in the Law relating to Beer Licenses.—From Roscommon, for Inquiry into the Working of the recent Poor Law Extension Act for Ireland.—From Roehampton, for an Extension of the Grants made by Government in Aid of Public Education, to the Irish Branch of the United Protestant Church of England and Ireland.

INGROSSING PUBLIC BILLS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR read the report made by the Select Committee, to whom was referred, on Tuesday last, the consideration of the best mode for dispensing with the system of ingrossment and inrolment of public Bills. It was to the effect that the ingrossment be abolished, and that in lieu thereof, with the view of preventing the chances of error, the Bills be printed by the Queen's Printer, immediately after it shall have passed the House in which it originated, and be dealt with in the same manner as ingrossed Bills are now dealt with; that such fair print copy shall be sent to the other House of Parliament, and when returned without amendment, or with amendments agreed to, two fair prints shall be printed on vellum, one of which shall be authenticated by the proper officers of each House, and the Royal Assent being endorsed thereon, the same is to be deposited in the Record Tower, in lieu of the present ingrossment. The Master of the Rolls to receive the duplicate copy of the fair print for the same purposes as the inrolled Acts now received and held by him. (*See* Lords' Proceedings, No. 4. sec. 13.)

On the Motion of the noble and learned Lord, the report was ordered to be printed.

MANAGEMENT OF HIGHWAYS.

The Earl of ST. GERMANS asked the noble Marquess the President of the Council, whether it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to bring in a Bill this Session for the better management of highways?

The Marquess of LANSDOWNE said, his right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department had given great attention to this subject, which was somewhat complicated, and that a Bill had been prepared, which, if not already introduced into the House of Commons, would be speedily.

NATIONAL SCHOOL SOCIETY.

Lord STANLEY said, a misapprehension prevailed as to the answer given by the noble Marquess the other night to his question, whether the correspondence between the Committee of the Privy Council on Education and the National School Society, had finally closed? The noble Marquess stated, that the correspondence had not finally closed, but he had been understood to say that it had closed. He was sure the noble Marquess would not object to correct that misapprehension.

The Marquess of LANSDOWNE said, he was much obliged to the noble Lord for having mentioned the subject. He was not himself aware of such a misapprehension as that referred to having prevailed. He stated the other evening, that the correspondence with the National Society had not finally closed; and he now expressed a confident hope thst it would be terminated in a manner satisfactory to all parties interested in the subject, as well as to himself. The correspondence had not actually closed.

THE NAVIGATION LAWS.

Earl WALDEGRAVE having referred to the proceedings of the Select Committee of their Lordships' House, last Session, upon the Navigation Laws, said that the inquiry had been left imperfect, although some seven thousand questions had been asked. Since the last Session, no fewer than four Members of the Committee had been rendered unable to attend, by various circumstances. Among them was the Earl of Hardwicke, the Chairman, who took a most active part in the inquiry. He wished to ask the noble Marquess whether it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government, under these circumstances, to propose a renewal of the Committee?

The Marquess of LANSDOWNE said, it was quite true that there had been withdrawn from the Committee, and partially from the House, no less than four of its most active Members, among whom was the noble Earl the Chairman (the Earl of Hardwicke), who had accepted the command of one of Her Majesty's ships. Under these circumstances, it was not the intention of the Government to propose a renewal of the Committee. If any noble Lord, however, saw reason to move for its renewal, he did not know that he should feel it his duty to oppose the Motion; but if he agreed to it, it must be upon the understanding that no measure introduced by the Government upon the question was to be delayed for the report of the Committee.

Lord BROUGHAM said, he had seen, with great indignation, certain slanderous attacks upon the noble and gallant Earl, as if he had been a party to a job, when he was appointed to the command of one of Her Majesty's ships. Anything more meritorious than the conduct of his noble and gallant Friend, in accepting a command from pure love of his profession, he did not know. He thought it was highly desirable to see men of such rank in the command of Her Majesty's ships.

The Marquess of LANSDOWNE was bound to say, that the noble Earl had accepted the command of one of Her Majesty's largest ships, strictly in the line of his professional duty; and that the First Lord of the Admiralty had bestowed it upon the person he thought best entitled to it.

The Earl of MINTO would readily bear testimony in favour of the noble Earl's desire for employment in his profession. During the time that he (the Earl of Minto) was at the Admiralty, Lord Hardwicke frequently stated to him that, though he had no wish to be employed afloat before others, he was very far from having abandoned his profession; and that if he could be useful in active service, he trusted he might be employed; and it was in consequence of that offer that he had given him the command of a ship.

House adjourned 'till To-morrow.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, February 8, 1849.

Minutes.] New Member Sworn.—For Truro, Humphry Willyams, Esq.

Petitions Presented. By Mr. Horsman, from the Parish of Sunderland, in the County of Durham, for a more Equal Distribution of the Revenue belonging to the Bishopwearmouth Rectory.—By Mr. Saville Ogle, from Newcastle-upon-Tyne, for an Alteration of the Law respecting the Church of England Clergy.—By Mr. Osborne, from the Baptists of Wakefield, Yorkshire, for the Abolition of Church Rates.—By Mr. George Thompson, from the same Place, in favour of the Abolition of Ecclesiastical Courts.—By Mr. Ewart, also from the same Place, for a Reduction of the Duties on Tea, Sugar, and Coffee, &c.—By Mr. Frewen, from Inhabitants of Roehampton, Surrey, for Encouragement to Schools in Connexion with the Church Education Society (Ireland).—By Mr. Masterman, from several Watchmakers of the City of London, for Inquiry into the Custom House Sales of Foreign Clocks and Watches.—By Colonel Thompson, from the Out-Pensioners of Chelsea Hospital, resident in Glasgow, and its Vicinity, respecting the Deductions from their Half-Pay.—By Lord Dudley Stuart, from the Parish of St. Pancras, Middlesex, in favour of an Alteration of the Poor Law.—By Mr. Corbally, from Landowners of the County of Meath; and by Mr. Osborne, from the Guardians of the Clonmel Union, for an Alteration of the Poor Law (Ireland).—By Mr. Broadwood, from the Borough of Bridgewater, for the Suppression of Promiscuous Intercourse.—By Mr. Hume, from the Arbroath and Forfar Railway Company, respecting Taxation on Railways.—By Mr. Brotherton, from Thomas Watts, Letter Carrier, for an Extension of the Superannuation Act.

HER MAJESTY'S REPLY TO THE ADDRESS.

Mr. W. S. S. LASCELLES (Comptroller of the Queen's Household) appeared at the bar of the House and stated that he had yesterday presented the Address of the House of Commons to Her Majesty, and that Her Majesty had been pleased to return the following Answer:—

> "I thank you for your loyal and dutiful Address.
>
> "I rely with confidence on your co-operation with Me in advancing the welfare and happiness of My People, whose interests it is My constant desire to promote."

RANK OF ROMAN CATHOLIC PRELATES.

Sir R. H. INGLIS could hardly hope that the House would recollect, that in the course of the last Session of Parliament he had called their attention to the subject which stood in his name on the Motion Paper for to-night. Early in the Session, indeed, he had moved for the production of a copy of a circular despatch by the Earl Grey, which was dated the 20th of November, 1847; and was addressed to the Governors of all the British colonies: and as that despatch referred to another communication from the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to Earl Grey, he gave notice at the close of the Session that he should take an early opportunity in the present Session of asking the attention of the House to the general subject involved in his notice. The Motion with which he proposed to conclude his observations on the present occasion was—

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that She will be graciously pleased to lay upon the table of the House a Copy of any Communication from the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to the Earl Grey, on the subject of the rank of persons described as Prelates of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, to which communication the Earl Grey adverted in his Circular Despatch of the 20th day of November, 1847."

Now, in justice to both parties—to the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, and to his correspondent the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, he ought to state, not in substance, but in words, the first sentence of this despatch. He was now quoting the circular letter dated "Downing-street, Nov. 20, 1847," and it was as follows:—

> "My attention has lately been called by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to the fact that the prelates of the Roman Catholic Church in the British colonies have not hitherto, in their official correspondence with the Governor and authorities, been usually addressed by the title to which their rank in their own church would appear to give them a just claim."

Whether the matter were deserving of regret or not, he would not stop to inquire; but with the greatest personal respect for the Earl of Clarendon himself—a respect which that noble Earl had well earned by his conduct during a season of peculiar trouble and agitation in Ireland—with all respect for that high functionary, he desired to know what constituted him the authority which was to regulate the intercourse between the Colonial Secretary of State and the officers subjected to his immediate control and responsibility—what justified the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in taking upon himself to be the advocate of the claims, whether just or not, of Roman Catholic bishops, not in his own jurisdiction—not under his own authority—but wherever they might be placed in any part of the world? He should say, that this was a fair question to be asked, even if the grounds upon which the communication between the Earl of Clarendon and Earl Grey rested, were correctly stated in fact or in law. The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, or rather the Earl Grey acting upon the suggestion of the Lord Lieutenant, proceeded to state that—

> "As Parliament has, by a recent Act, the Charitable Bequests Act, formally recognised the rank of the Irish Roman Catholic prelates, by giving them precedence immediately after the prelates of the Established Church of the same degree—the Roman Catholic archbishops and bishops taking rank immediately after the Protestant archbishops and bishops respectively—it has appeared"—

To whom? Not to Her Majesty's Secretary for the Colonies, but—

> "to Her Majesty's Government, that it is their duty to conform to the rule thus laid down by the Legislature; and I have accordingly to instruct you hereafter officially to address the prelates of the Roman Catholic Church in your Government by the title of 'your Grace,' or 'your Lordship,' as the case may be."

He (Sir R. H. Inglis) meant to say that there never had been a grosser mis-statement of a plain fact than the statement contained in the paragraph which he had just cited, that the Act of Parliament to which the noble Earl (Earl Grey) referred in the paper laid upon the table of the House, contained one single word upon the subject in respect of which it had been so quoted. He defied the Attorney General, the Solicitor General, or even the humblest layman in the House, to find in the Charitable Bequests Act one single expression referring to the subject-matter of Earl Grey's despatch. That Act provided that it should be lawful for Her Majesty to nominate ten persons, of whom five, and not more, should be members of the Church of Rome; but whether they were to be priests, deacons, bishops, or laymen, was nowhere stated. Either the noble Earl the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and the noble Earl the Secretary for the Colonies, had never read the Act, or they had altogether forgotten it; and had confounded it with the *Gazette*. But an announcement in the *Gazette* did not imply or enact that certain persons should take civil rank in the order in which their names were mentioned. Every one who had ever read a commission appointing Lords of the Treasury, or Lords of the Admiralty, knew that the precedence there given was one of official seniority, and not of personal dignity. These matters, he was aware, might be looked upon by many as subjects which a wise man would not much care about; but he confessed that he regarded them with a jealous eye when they followed the will of a foreign potentate. His objection was not to the persons recognised as archbishops and bishops of the Church of Rome having such rank as the members of their own communion were willing to concede to them *inter se*; but his complaint was that the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland had suggested, and that the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department had adopted, a principle which took from the Queen the fountain of honour, which belonged to Her *jure coronæ*, and placed it at the disposal of the Earl Grey. The power of creating intermediate ranks in the nobility of the empire had no existence whatever in the patent of a Secretary of State. He (Sir R. H. Inglis) believed that Her Majesty had not been consulted at all upon the subject; and he observed that Her Majesty's name was not made use of in the despatch, although it undoubtedly would have been had Her sanction been previously obtained. Precedence in Her Majesty's dominions rested partly upon immemorial custom, and partly upon the Statute of Henry VIII; and he (Sir R. H. Inglis) doubted, in fact, whether the Queen herself could have given the precedence now claimed under that despatch of Earl Grey, which gave the Roman Catholic bishops rank after viscounts. What induced him most especially to call attention to this subject was the recognition thus given to an authority which this country for three centuries had invariably repudiated and disowned—the recognition of the authority of Rome to place in Her Majesty's dominions, without Her sanction or authority, a class of individuals, who, when so placed, were given precedence over the Queen's own subjects. What was the meaning of an Established Church in this country, if it did not follow the rights of the Crown of England wherever that Crown ruled? He asked the Attorney General—having given him notice of the question—in what part of the world where the Queen of England had dominion, was not her Church—the Church of England—established? Treaties might, here and there, recognise other communions: local authorities might unhappily neglect the claims of the Church of the Crown of England; but, as an abstract proposition, he contended, that the Church followed the Crown. If the new power claimed by the Secretary of State were applicable to the colonies, it would be equally applicable to any part of Her Majesty's dominions; and the Pope might just as well, and with equal authority, send an archbishop to Westminster, and a bishop to London, as an archbishop to Sydney. The Imperial Crown of England, being necessarily held by a member and a communicant of the Protestant Episcopal Church of England, it followed that wherever her Crown was acknowledged, her Church should be established. Wherever an Englishman carried with him the law of trial by jury, the Habeas Corpus, and the law of primogeniture, there he had an equal right to find established the Church of this country. The Scotch colony in Darien having been founded before the union of Scotland with England, he admitted that if that colony still existed, the Presbyterian Church ought to have been established there; and a Scotchman would have been entitled to expect that his own national Church at home would have precedency in the dependencies of his ancient kingdom. By parity of reasoning, an Englishman had an equal right to find the Church of England established in whatever dominions of the Crown he went to. Every English colony should be a miniature of England, not only in civil, but also in religious rights. He had often stated, what was said recently by the hon. Member for the county of Cork (Mr. E. B. Roche), that he wished far less for emigration than for colonisation. But no system deserved that name, and none was entitled to the support of Parliament, which did not provide for the colonists sent forth, all those aids of education and religion, as well as of law, in the security of person and of property, which the parties enjoyed in England, and had a right to find everywhere under the Imperial Crown. To revert to the letter which formed the immediate subject of his Motion. The Government adopted this letter of the Earl Grey, or they did not. If they did, it was not the act of Earl Grey, as an individual, but the act of the Cabinet; and he wanted to know if they had obtained Her Majesty's authority for that course. He apprehended they had never asked nor obtained Her Majesty's sanction; for if they had, it would have been more decorous if the Secretary of State had declared that he had had it by command from Her Majesty to give those directions. If, on the other hand, they told him there was no such despatch from the Lord Lieutenant to Earl Grey, and that the whole was the act of the Earl Grey only, the charge came with double force against Earl Grey. It was no small aggravation of the matter complained of, that this precedence was given at the expense of one of the most eminent and excellent of the colonial prelates, Bishop Broughton, whom he named to his honour, venerable for his age, his virtues, and his services; and admirable, at the very moment, when this despatch deprived him of his rank, for the self-denying sacrifice, with which he had made over a large portion of his income for the purpose of endowing another bishopric for his Church. He then moved the Address of which he had given notice.

Mr. SPOONER seconded the Motion.

Lord J. RUSSELL: Sir, I will say at once that there is no official communication from the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to Earl Grey upon the subject of the rank of persons described as prelates of the Roman Catholic Church in Earl Grey's circular; and it does not appear to me to be a fit matter with regard to which the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland should correspond officially with the Colonial Secretary. But what the Earl of Clarendon did was this—in the Charitable Bequests Act there is so far an acknowledgment of the rank of certain ecclesiastics belonging to the Church of Rome, that they are in several of the clauses in that Act called archbishops and bishops of the Church of Rome. Now, being archbishops and bishops, the usual titles by which we describe such dignitaries is "the most reverend," and "the right reverend;" and, in addressing them in conversation, or by letter, they are usually termed, "your grace," and "your lordship." Now, the Earl of Clarendon was of opinion, that when he saw certain prelates of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, it would be fit, lest they might feel themselves in any respect not placed in the rank which they ought to hold, not only to call them archbishops and bishops, in the place of "doctor," as they were formerly called—Dr. Troy, and the like—but to address them as "your grace," and "your lordship." Having done that, I believe that he communicated privately to Earl Grey, some time afterwards, that he found there were Roman Catholic bishops in the colonies, one of whom was then, I believe, residing in Ireland, and that he thought what had been done in Ireland might very well be done in the colonies, as he believed it would be gratifying to the Roman Catholic Church to have their rank thus acknowledged. The Charitable Bequests Act certainly does not give any particular title to archbishops and bishops, any more than calling them archbishops and bishops, neither does that Act in any way confer a right by which a Roman Catholic archbishop may call himself the Archbishop of Dublin, or of any see where there is a Protestant bishop by law existing. In the same way, Earl Grey states, though it may be proper to call an archbishop an archbishop with his name, yet that it would not be proper to call him by the name of any see where there was an archbishop or bishop of the Protestant Church by law established. But, I own, I do not think that this is a matter of very great importance. It was very agreeable to the feelings of the Roman Catholic archbishops and bishops that they should be called by the titles by which they are usually designated. They have received those titles; but that does not imply any legal claim to authority; and I cannot conceive, therefore, that it is necessary for this House to take any proceeding in the matter. If the hon. Baronet (Sir R. H. Inglis) were to press for this official communication, the only return would be, that there was no letter of the kind to be found in the Colonial Office. The hon. Baronet says the Church of England is carried into all the colonies, and that, therefore, every colony ought to be a miniature Church of England. I do not think, however, that it would be very convenient to adopt that plan. I do not think, for example, that it would be convenient to adopt it in Trinidad, where there are a greater number of Roman Catholics than Protestants, and where, if adopted, every Roman Catholic would be looked upon as a Dissenter. I have now stated the brief facts of this case, and do not think it necessary to occupy the time of the House with more lengthened observation upon it.

Mr. GOULBURN said, there was a public impression, which it was certainly inconvenient should remain, that in the colony of Sydney, to which his hon. Friend (Sir R. Inglis) had referred, in consequence of the Roman Catholic Church having placed an archbishop there, while the Church of England had only a bishop; the effect of the letter of Earl Grey was to give precedence to the former. He (Mr. Goulburn) wished to know if it was the opinion of Her Majesty's Government that they had allowed any superiority to the Roman Catholic Church in that colony. He knew they might be told that it was easy to get rid of the difficulty by appointing a prelate of equal rank there; but he was of opinion that it was better not to run a race with the Church of Rome in such matters. In the Charitable Bequests Act the Legislature had laid down no rule whatever as to the precedence of the prelates of the Roman Catholic Church.

Mr. J. O'CONNELL said, he thought that one of the most obvious deductions to be drawn from the speech of the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of Oxford (Sir R. Inglis) was, that the Catholic Church ought to be the established church of Ireland. He had confessed that it would be quite right for the Scottish bishops to retain possession of their sees, and that England was entitled to her own Church; and the natural inference was, that the people of Ireland ought to have their religion also established by law. He (Mr. J. O'Connell) did not say that this was his opinion, because he would much regret any connexion between his Church and the State. He would remind hon. Gentlemen that those very sees which they now had in England had been originally established by the Pope. As to the titles conferred under the Charitable Bequests Act on the Catholic prelates of Ireland, he did not attach any importance to them. He did not, for instance, think there was much honour in being degraded down from Archbishop of Dublin to Archbishop Murray, or Archbishop Murray of Dublin. The Catholics of Ireland believed their own bishops to be alone entitled to assume the names of their sees. He should protest against the wording of the Motion, in which the prelates of his own Church were called "persons described as prelates of the Roman Catholic Church;" and he also protested against the noble Lord's (Lord J. Russell) supposition of Roman Catholics being called Dissenters. The Roman Catholics were not dissenters from the Established Church, but they regarded Protestants as being dissenters from their Church.

Lord J. RUSSELL explained that what he had stated was, that it would be very offensive if the Roman Catholics of Trinidad were to be told that they were Dissenters from the Established Church of the colony.

Mr. PLUMPTRE wished to know whether, in point of fact, the Roman Catholic archbishop in Sydney was allowed to take precedence of the bishop of the Church of England?

Lord J. RUSSELL said, he did not believe that any precedence had been given to the Roman Catholic prelate in Sydney by what had been done, or that the letter of his noble Friend (the Earl of Clarendon) had at all altered the forms of precedence there. At the same time, he was well aware that some unpleasant feeling might exist in the colony on this subject, because he recollected that some years ago the Protestant bishop complained of the Roman Catholic prelate having waited on the Governor wearing the episcopal ring and other insignia of his order. The matter had been referred to him (Lord J. Russell), and his reply was, that he thought it unfair to object to a man wearing any dress he pleased. The proceeding had, he believed, annoyed the Roman Catholic prelate a good deal, as he had complained at being interfered with in wearing the dress that distinguished his order in every part of the world.

Sir R. H. INGLIS replied: He had hoped that his noble Friend would have informed the House that the despatch of which he complained, had, so far as Bishop Broughton was concerned, been practically withdrawn; because he had reason to believe—but the statement would have come more graciously from his noble Friend—that the Protestant Bishop of Sydney was no longer placed below the Roman Catholic, whom the Pope had sent there as archbishop; it having been ascertained that Bishop Broughton, as metropolitan, still held the pre-eminence. The general question, however, remained, had the Pope, a foreign Sovereign, a right to create ranks in the States of Her Majesty? In the *Sydney Chronicle*, the supposed organ of the Church of Rome, is the following paragraph:—

> "As the bull of his Holiness, Pope Pius IX., appointing Dr. Goold to the episcopal bench, bears date prior to the letters patent under which Dr. Perry hold office as the Anglican Bishop of Melbourne, Dr. Goold will be entitled to precedence."

Here was a claim which would be admitted in the dominions of no other Protestant potentate—a claim, too, which every hon. Member in that House had sworn to resist. He (Sir R. H. Inglis) denied the validity of the course adopted by Earl Grey in this instance; but if his noble Friend the First Lord of the Treasury consented to a return of *nil* to the Address, he should be perfectly satisfied.

The Motion was then agreed to.

BRITISH MUSEUM.

Mr. EWART begged to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether there was any objection to lay before the House the evidence taken by the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the constitution and management of the British Museum?

Sir G. GREY said, he did not apprehend that any objection would be made to giving a portion of the papers required, but there was an objection to have all the papers given for the present.

Sir R. H. INGLIS appealed to the right hon Baronet (Sir G. Grey) whether he would consent to lay papers on the table when only half the case had been heard? He wished to know from the right hon. Baronet if he was aware that the trustees of the British Museum had not received any communication from the Commissioners until nine months after they had begun their inquiry?

Sir G. GREY said, that he had before explained that only a portion of the papers could be given at present. As to the point alluded to by the hon. Baronet (Sir R. Inglis), he would reserve his opinion upon it for the present.

IRISH POOR LAW.

Sir W. SOMERVILLE moved the following Resolution:—

> "That the Select Committee upon the Irish Poor Law do consist of twenty-one Members, and that the following Members be Members of the said Committee:—Lord John Russell, Sir James Graham, Sir John Young, Colonel Dunne, Mr. George Alexander Hamilton, Sir William Somerville, Mr. Poulett Scrope, Sir Robert Ferguson, Mr. Charles Clements, Mr. Shafto Adair, Mr. Cornewall Lewis, Mr. William Monsell, Sir Denham Norreys, Sir John Pakington, Mr. Henry Arthur Herbert, Mr. John Reynolds, Mr, Sharman Crawford, Mr. William Fagan, Mr. Anthony O'Flaherty, Major Samuel Blackall, and Mr. Augustus Stafford."

Mr. HENRY said, he wished to increase the number to twenty-two, in order to introduce the name of a Gentleman without whom he thought the Committee would not be perfect.

Sir W. SOMERVILLE said, he believed that Committees of this description usually consisted either of fifteen or twenty-one Members. Twenty-one was more than the ordinary number, and he did not think it desirable to add another name.

MR. HENRY was not particularly anxious to have twenty-two Members. Perhaps the right hon. Baronet (Sir W. Somerville) would withdraw a name, in order that he (Mr. Henry) might add one. [*Cries of* "Name."] He moved that Mr. Bright be a Member of the Committee.

After a short pause, the hon. Member withdrew his Amendment.

On the question that Lord John Russell be a Member of the Committee,

MR. GRACE said, that as a representative of one of the western counties of Ireland, he felt called upon to express his strong objection to the names which had been proposed to be put upon this Committee. The western districts were especially unrepresented. It was meet that those who were oppressed by the unfortunate working of the system in the country, should have an opportunity of making it known, and endeavour to have all those errors corrected.

MR. F. FRENCH said, he thought hon. Members had some reason to complain of this matter. He had no objection to the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell), or to any other of the Members of Her Majesty's Government, being placed upon the Committee, especially as the noble Lord stated yesterday that he was prepared to explain to the Committee what were the plans which Her Majesty's Government meant to propose for the amendment of the Irish Poor Law. At the same time, he could not forget that the noble Lord also stated, that if the Committee should differ from him in opinion, he would not pledge himself to be bound by their conclusions, but would propose his own plans to the House; so that it was plain the Committee was to be made the authority for the Act if they should happen to agree with the noble Lord; but if they did not, then their opinions were to be altogether disregarded. Now, how was this Committee proposed to be constituted? There was a large proportion of Ministers and of official persons. There was the First Lord of the Treasury, the right hon. Baronet the ex-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir James Graham), the right hon. Baronet the Secretary for Ireland; there was the hon. Member for Leitrim (Mr. Clements), who had been an Assistant Poor Law Commissioner; and there was the hon. Member for Herefordshire, who had been one of the English Poor Law Commissioners, and who was now Under Secretary of State for the Home Department. Then Ulster was disproportionately represented on the Committee in the persons of the hon. Baronet the Member for Cavan (Sir John Young), the hon. Baronet the Member for Londonderry (Sir Robert Ferguson), and the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. Shafto Adair), who had large property in that province. The south also was represented by the hon. Member for Mallow (Sir Denham Norreys), the hon. Member for Cork city (Mr. Fagan), while Limerick county might be said to have two represesentatives in the person of its hon. Member (Mr. Monsell), and the hon. Member for Northamptonshire (Mr. Stafford); but the county Clare was totally unrepresented, though a more efficient Member it would be difficult to find than the hon. Baronet (Sir L. O'Brien), who now represented it. Besides, there were two Members placed on the Committee—the hon. Members for Dublin and Mallow (Mr. Reynolds and Sir Denham Norreys)—who were absent from the House. It was necessary that they in the west should have their interests considered, and that they should not be sacrificed to the supposed interests of others. He might also mention, as persons who would have proved themselves efficient Members, the names of the hon. Member for Radnorshire (Sir John Walsh), and the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Sadleir). There was also his hon. Colleague (Mr. Grace), who, as chairman of a board of guardians, had acquired great experience as to the working of the law. Upon the whole, he thought they were entitled to protest against the selection of names that had been adopted.

SIR G. GREY said, every one who had had experience in the nomination of a Committee must be aware of the difficulty there always existed in making out a list that should be free from exception; and in the present case the difficulty had been greatly increased. His hon. Friend (Mr. French) seemed to think that every Gentleman who was not on the list was branded with a stigma, as if he were unfit to serve. Now that was not the case. On the contrary, the Government had been most reluctantly compelled, on account of the limited number of the Committee, to exclude many Members from the Committee whose services they were most anxious to obtain; and two days' notice of the Committee had been given in the hope that if exception were taken to any one, some notice of amendment would be given to them. He supposed that no objection would be made to the nomination of the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) at the head of the Government. With regard to the right hon. Baronet the Member for Ripon (Sir J. Graham), his great practical experience rendered it a most desirable thing that they should obtain his services. When that right hon. Baronet placed his services at the disposal of the Government, they could not help feeling it as a favour conferred upon the House and the country. The hon. Member (Mr. French) had counted up the number of Ulster men upon the Committee; but he begged to remind him that he had placed the hon. Member for Cavan (Sir J. Young) upon the Committee because of his general knowledge and experience. Though Cavan was certainly in Ulster, yet the administration of the law there was very different from what it was in Londonderry. Of the hon. Member for Portarlington (Colonel Dunne) he could only say— [Mr. FRENCH: I do not object to the hon. Member for Portarlington.] Very well: Then the hon. Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. G. A. Hamilton) had been selected for his practical acquaintance with the working of the law. The hon. Member (Mr. French) had no objection, he believed, to his right hon. Friend the Secretary for Ireland. He did take an objection to the hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. Poulett Scrope); but looking to the necessary amount of landlord influence on the Committee, he thought it was but fair that the hon. Member for Stroud, who had paid so much attention to the subject, should not be omitted. Then with regard to the hon. Member for Leitrim (Mr. Clements), he had been an assistant poor-law commissioner, and he (Sir G. Grey) had always heard that his district had been remarkably well managed; and, besides, the hon. Member was, in fact, a representative of the west—the county of Leitrim being one of the border counties of Connaught. With regard to the hon. Member for Herefordshire (Mr. C. Lewis), it was thought that his great practical experience in the administration of the English Poor Law, would be of infinite service in the Committee. It was true that there were two Members on the Committee who were not present in the House; but Sir Denham Norreys had written to him to say that he was willing to serve if the House chose to elect him. He admitted that there was some foundation for the objection that there were four Irish Members from the province of Munster, whilst there were only two, strictly speaking, from the province of Connaught. He also admitted that it was intended originally to have made an equal distribution, and that there should have been three Members from each of those provinces. It was strongly pressed that it was desirable to obtain the services of the hon. Member for Kerry, in addition to the services of the hon. Member for Limerick. As to the appointment of the hon. Member for Roscommon (Mr. Grace), he could only say that he was in the list originally made out, and that he should be happy to have the benefit of his services.

COLONEL DUNNE said, it appeared to him that the landed interest of the country was not sufficiently represented. There were only eight Members of counties upon the Committee, and as the landed interest which they represented was the most pressed by the working of the poor-law, he thought they ought to have more representatives. He certainly did not object to Mr. Scrope's name; but as that hon. Gentleman had voted against the Committee last year, he did not think that Mr. Scrope would have consented to serve on a Committee which he had voted against. Other Members were objected to because they entertained decided views in support of the worst parts of the Irish Poor Law. For himself, he did not object, because he thought, however decided a man's views might be, when he came to hear the evidence adduced he would change them. He would only add, that it was not supposed but that every man named on the Committee was fit to be there; but they knew others who were still better qualified. He would not recommend any substitute for them, but he would follow the example of the noble Lord at the head of the Government, and say, that if the Committee did not agree with his views, he would dissent from the Committee.

SIR R. PEEL suggested that the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) should reconsider the question of limiting the number of the Committee to twenty-one. During last Session there were several cases in which they had imposed considerable inconvenience upon themselves from restricting the number of Members on Committees. He (Sir R. Peel) knew it had been felt of late years that there was an advantage in limiting the numbers; but there were certain cases of great importance to the country where a great advantage had been gained by extending the numbers. Take the case which occurred last Session, where there was certainly less occasion than at present for extending the numbers, when twenty-six Members were appointed upon the Bank Committee, and not the slightest inconvenience was felt by extending the numbers beyond the ordinary rule. The Committee attended most punctually, and the greatest attention was paid to the proceedings. Now, if there were any parts of Ireland not fairly represented in the Committee, he thought it would be better to act upon the principle to which he had referred, and have an extension of the numbers of the Committee.

Mr. SADLEIR suggested that the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) ought to bear in remembrance the first sentence in the first of the three remarkable reports furnished by Mr. Nicholls—that whatever general knowledge or general views might be formed from books and reports, it was absolutely necessary that you should have the advantage of personal examination into the state and condition of the poor of Ireland in order to acquire that knowledge which would qualify you to suggest any practical measure for remedying destitution in Ireland. That was the spirit of the first sentence in the report. He thought they ought not to confine the Members for Connaught to the two smallest divisions of that province, but that it would be advisable also to place on it the representatives of the two largest counties. He thought that these two points ought to be considered in the selection of the Committee. It was also worth remembering that, however important a practical experience in the working of the English Poor Law might be, practical knowledge of the working of the Irish Poor Law was still more important. He felt it as most desirable that Gentlemen placed in the position of the hon. Member for Northamptonshire (Mr. Stafford) should be on the Committee, because they combined acquaintance with the practical working of the poor-law in Ireland, and an equal knowledge and experience of the working of a similar law in this country.

Mr. J. O'CONNELL said, that the Committee excited a great deal of interest in Ireland, but it was not likely to give satisfaction. It was a question whether it was not better to divide the unpopularity amongst as many as possible. It was very wrong to leave out those important counties, Mayo and Roscommon, in both of which the full working of the present system was very striking. His own opinion was, that it was impossible to amend this law; and the best thing to be done was to place Gentlemen who were acquainted with the various parts of Ireland on the Committee.

Mr. O'FLAHERTY also took the liberty of pressing upon the Government the suggestion of the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth (Sir R. Peel), and thus admit several highly respectable Gentlemen who were at present excluded. The Government had honoured him with a request to serve upon the Committee, and he undertook the task most willingly, and would devote his best attention to the subject; at the same time, he felt that all he could do would not be sufficient to press upon the Committee the extreme distress of the western counties.

Sir W. SOMERVILLE said, as the Motion stood, the Committee was restricted to twenty-one Members; but if the House would agree to the Committee as now named, he had no objection to adopt the suggestion of the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth, and name some additional Members.

Mr. MONSELL said, as it seemed settled that there were to be additional Members, he hoped the Government would see the desirableness of adding some Scotch Gentlemen to the Committee; and he would also suggest that the predecessor of the right hon. Baronet in the Irish Secretaryship (the Earl of Lincoln) should be added to the Committee.

Mr. CHRISTOPHER hoped the Government would not adopt the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman with regard to Scotch Members, because the administration of the poor-law there was very different from what it was both in this country and in Ireland.

The name of Lord John Russell was then agreed to, as were those of Sir James Graham, Sir John Young, Colonel Dunne, Mr. George Alexander Hamilton, and Sir William Somerville.

On the name of Mr. Poulett Scrope being proposed,

Mr. HENRY repeated his notice, that when the additional Members were nominated he would move that Mr. John Bright be one of the number.

Mr. GROGAN moved, that Sir Lucius

O'Brien be substituted in place of Mr. Poulett Scrope.

Mr. SPEAKER explained, that the hon. Member could not move any name in substitution; he must confine himself at that stage to objecting to any Member nominated.

Mr. GROGAN than moved, that Mr. Scrope's name be omitted.

The House divided on the question, that Mr. Scrope be one other Member of the said Committee:—Ayes 119; Noes 44: Majority 75.

List of the Ayes.

Abdy, T. N.
Adair, R. A. S.
Anson, hon. Col.
Armstrong, Sir A.
Arundel and Surrey, Earl of
Bellew, R. M.
Berkeley, hon. Capt.
Berkeley, C. L. G.
Blackall, S. W.
Bouverie, hon. E. P.
Bramston, T. W.
Brotherton, J.
Brown, H.
Brown, W.
Bunbury, E. H.
Butler, P. S.
Callaghan, D.
Campbell, hon. W. F.
Caulfeild, J. M.
Charteris, hon. F.
Clerk, rt. hon. Sir G.
Cockburn, A. J. E.
Colebrooke, Sir T. E.
Cowper, hon. W. F.
Crawford, W. S.
Dalrymple, Capt.
Drummond, H.
Duncan, G.
Dundas, Adm.
Du Pre, C. G.
Ebrington, Visct.
Ellis, J.
Ferguson, Sir R. A.
Frewen, C. H.
Gladstone, rt. hn. W. E.
Glyn, G. C.
Goulburn, rt. hon. H.
Graham, rt. hon. Sir J.
Granger, T. C.
Greene, J.
Grenfell, C. W.
Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.
Grey, R. W.
Grosvenor, Earl
Hallyburton, Lord J. F.
Harris, R.
Hastie, A.
Hawes, B.
Headlam, T. E.
Heathcoat, J.
Henry, A.
Heyworth, L.
Hobhouse, T. B.
Howard, Lord E.
Howard, hon. C. W. G.
Humphery, Ald.
Kershaw, J.
Labouchere, rt. hon. H.
Lacy, H. C.
Lascelles, hon. W. S.
Lewis, G. C.
Lockhart, A. E.
Mackinnon, W. A.
M'Gregor, J.
Maher, N. V.
Meagher, T.
Mahon, The O'Gorman
Maitland, T.
Mandeville, Visct.
Mangles, R. D.
Maule, rt. hon. F.
Melgund, Visct.
Milner, W. M. E.
Milnes, R. M.
Monsell, W.
Morris, D.
Mowatt, F.
Norreys, Lord
Nugent, Lord
O'Brien, J.
O'Connor, F.
Paget, Lord C.
Palmerston, Visct.
Parker, J.
Peel, rt. hon. Sir R.
Pinney, W.
Power, N.
Rawdon, Col.
Rich, H.
Romilly, Sir J.
Russell, Lord J.
Russell, F. C. H.
Sandars, J.
Scholefield, W.
Seymer, H. K.
Seymour, Lord
Sheridan, R. B.
Simeon, J.
Smith, rt. hon. R. V.
Smith, J. B.
Somerville, rt. hon. Sir W.
Stansfield, W. R. C.
Stuart, Lord D.
Tancred, H. W.
Tenison, E. K.
Thompson, Col.
Thompson, G.
Thornely, T.
Townshend, Capt.
Trelawny, J. S.
Williams, J.
Willoughby, Sir H.
Wilson, J.
Wood, rt. hon. Sir C.
Wortley, rt. hon. J. S.
Wrightson, W. B.
Wyld, J.
Wyvill, M.
Young, Sir J.

TELLERS.
Tufnell, H.
Hill, Lord M.

List of the Noes.

Archdall, Capt. M.
Arkwright, G.
Bennet, P.
Beresford, W.
Bernard, Visct.
Bourke, R. S.
Bowles, Adm.
Brisco, M.
Buller, Sir J. Y.
Burke, Sir T. J.
Carew, W. H. P.
Christy, S.
Cole, hon. H. A.
Corbally, M. E.
Dawson, hon. T. V.
Dick, Q.
Drumlanrig, Visct.
Duckworth, Sir J. T. B.
Duncuft, J.
Dunne, F. P.
Floyer, J.
French, F.
Fuller, A. E.
Grace, O. D. J.
Grattan, H.
Greenall, G.
Gwyn, H.
Hamilton, J. H.
Hamilton, Lord C.
Herbert, H. A.
Hill, Lord E.
Hood, Sir A.
Hornby, J.
Mullings, J. R.
Napier, J.
Newry and Morne, Visct.
O'Brien, Sir L.
St. George, C.
Spooner, R.
Taylor, T. E.
Tyrell, Sir J. T.
Verner, Sir W.
Waddington, H. S.
Walsh, Sir J. B.

TELLERS.
Grogan, E.
Stafford, A.

Captain TAYLOR moved that the name of Mr. Cornewall Lewis be omitted.

Sir J. WALSH defended the nomination of Mr. Lewis, as that Gentleman had lately written a book upon the subject, which showed great acquaintance with the matters that would come before the Committee.

Mr. VERNON SMITH contended that this was not entirely an Irish question; and he thought the real ground of complaint was, not that there were too many, but that there were too few English Members on the Committee. If any additions were to be made to the Committee, he would endeavour that some independent English Members should be added.

Sir W. SOMERVILLE said, that some objections had been made to Gentlemen holding strong opinions; but he must observe, that there were others who held opinions as decided in an opposite direction who were selected Members.

Captain TAYLOR then withdrew his Motion, and the Committee, as originally proposed, was appointed.

CALL OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. GRATTAN, in rising to move that there be a call of the House for the 9th instant, said, he did not know if Her Majesty's Ministers would object to the Motion.

If there was not sufficient time for this call, the case did not rest with him, but with those who had fixed the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act for that day. There was, besides, a piece of sharp practice in this case; for the Bill was fixed to be read a second time, though it had not yet been printed. An alteration in the rules of business had recently been made relative to the printing of Bills; and as the new rule was not to have the Bill printed until after it had been read a second time, he wished the House to recur to the wholesome practice of having the Bill printed after being read a first time. He wished to have Irish Members present on Friday, when an important question was to be debated. He thought there was the more necessity for this call of the House, because on Tuesday last there were no fewer than fifty-five Irish Members absent.

Lord JOHN RUSSELL thought there was no necessity for a call of the House, as, in all probability, the Irish Members who had been absent on Tuesday would be in their places to-morrow. He would take that opportunity of mentioning that the debate on the Habeas Corpus Act would stand first for to-morrow.

The Motion was then negatived without a division.

Mr. J. O'CONNELL complained that the Bill was not as yet in the hands of Members.

Lord JOHN RUSSELL said, it would be in the hands of hon. Members to-morrow; but it would be precisely the same as the Bill of last year.

House adjourned at half after Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, February 9, 1849.

Minutes.] A Conference. Ingrossing and Inrolling of Bills.

Petitions Presented. From Limerick, and the Gort Union, for an Alteration and Inquiry into the present Poor Law (Ireland).

EMIGRATION TAX IN THE BRITISH COLONIES.

Lord STANLEY said, he had on the preceding evening given notice of his intention to put a question to the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies on a subject of very great interest, and to which he trusted the inquiries of the noble Lord had been directed. The question he had to put to the noble Earl was with reference to a subject on which he had made some inquiries during the last Session, namely, the exorbitant and enormous rate of taxation imposed by the British Colonial Legislatures, and especially in Canada, upon persons emigrating from this country. That tax he believed the noble Earl would agree with him in thinking was far greater than was necessary. Now, whilst he (Lord Stanley) was quite ready to admit the right of the Colonial Legislatures to protect themselves against an indiscriminate pauper emigration, still he believed the noble Earl must be of opinion that what had been done was far beyond the necessity of the case. As emigration from Ireland was likely to be carried at the present season to a very great extent, as the period was fast approaching when the emigration would be commenced, he trusted that the noble Earl would be able to inform the House and the country that the Colonial Legislatures were likely to reduce the heavy taxation previously imposed by them. The question which he now put to the noble Lord was one in which he was personally interested, for he was quite sure that a considerable number of his own tenants were likely to become emigrants during the present year, and that they would come to him to know his advice as to where they ought to go; and his assistance too, if they had not the means to carry themselves out; and in such cases he must say that the answer given by him would, in no inconsiderable degree, be influenced by the answer which he now received from the noble Earl. It would depend upon that answer whether he should tell them to transfer their labour to the British Colonies, or, if driven from it by a heavy rate of taxation, to seek a refuge on the more hospitable shores of the United States of America.

Earl GREY said, that after the noble Lord had referred to this subject last Session, he addressed a despatch to the Earl of Elgin, Governor General of Canada, in relation to it. By the last mail, which arrived only a few days ago, he had received a communication from the Governor General, stating that he had been in deliberation with his Council upon the subject of the tax, and informing him that it was the intention of the Executive Council of Canada to propose to the Legislature some modifications in the law which was passed last year. At the same time, the Governor General distinctly stated that though the tax was very considerable, it was not, in point of fact, more than sufficient to meet the expenses incurred by the province on account of the emigrants. When the noble Lord talked of emigrants being attracted from Canada to a more hospitable quarter, namely, New York, let him turn his attention to the fact, that in Canada emigrants received a much greater amount of assistance than in New York. In New York no assistance whatever was rendered to them except in cases of sickness, when they were sent to an hospital; but, in Canada, besides hospital accommodation, those who were unable to pay for it themselves were provided with gratuitous conveyances, at the cost of the province, to the most remote districts, and to those parts where they were fully certain of finding employment. This constituted a very material difference, and, even after reckoning the Canadian tax, he believed that on the whole, the route to the regions of the west by Canada was at this moment considerably cheaper for emigrants than the route by New York. At the same time, Lord Elgin and his Council were desirous of reducing the tax, believing that it was objectionable in principle; but, upon the other hand, the circumstances of Quebec and Montreal were very different from those of New York. In the large commercial city of New York, employment was almost always to be found for emigrants upon their arrival; but in the much smaller population, having much fewer resources, of the two cities he had named, it was at times quite impossible, when a fleet of emigrant ships arrived, to provide all the emigrants with employment. The consequence was, that unless some means of conveyance into the interior were provided, an intolerable burden was thrown upon those cities, whilst, if those means were not provided, the emigrants would have to sustain greater inconvenience than the tax now complained of. It was, however, the disposition of the Executive Council, and, he believed, of the Legislature also, to deal with this question in the most liberal way towards the emigrants. They felt it to be their interest to do so. They knew that the freight of produce by the St. Lawrence was reduced if the vessels carrying it could earn something by taking emigrants outward. At the same time, they were bound to consider the whole interests of the province. The calamities that followed from the extensive emigration of 1847, were of a description so frightful that it was impossible they should not establish what they considered adequate precautions against a repetition of those evils. He might also observe, that even with the restrictions that had been imposed, the emigration to Canada, last year, fully equalled the means which the province had of disposing of the emigrants that arrived. The completion of the great public works upon the St. Lawrence caused a great diminution in the means of employment. It appeared by a report from Mr. Cannon, one of the engineers engaged upon those works, that a very large proportion of the emigrants were unskilled labourers. For farm-servants, he said there was no difficulty in finding employment in the far west; but when no public works were in progress, the difficulty in finding employment for unskilled labourers was very great indeed. Even last year, when the class of emigrants was much better than in the year before, a large proportion consisted of labourers of this description. Before he sat down, it would be proper for him to add, as the noble Lord had intimated that the question was now under consideration, whether intending emigrants were to be directed to our own colonies or to foreign countries, that the Governor General of Canada, the Executive Council, and the emigration agents, all concurred in stating that there was no prospect of a great deal of employment there in the present year; and they strongly advised that a very large proportion of emigrants should not be recommended to proceed thither instead of the United States. This was a subject, however, upon which it appeared to him desirable that the most accurate information should be placed before their Lordships and the country as speedily as possible. The despatches therefore which he had received should be printed immediately for the use of the two Houses of Parliament, and in a few days he hoped also to lay upon the table the correspondence that had already taken place.

Lord MONTEAGLE was glad that this conversation had occurred, although he much regretted to hear the last observation made by the noble Earl, and which was directly in opposition to information he had himself received from Canada. He had not been led to think that the arrival of strong and healthy emigrants would be other than a benefit to the colony. That there should have been difficulty in providing for the emigrants to Canada in 1847 could be easily understood; but what had then been objected to in Canada was not the number of emigrants, but the disease that accompanied them. As to the statement made by the noble Earl that the colonial emigrant tax had not been productive, no one could be surprised at it. It had impeded emigration by its amount, it was a bad financial measure from its excess, and therefore it had failed. In proportion as the tax on emigrants had been increased, that emigration had been diverted to foreign countries. In the early part of last Session, his noble Friend had introduced an amended Passenger Act, which was intended to protect the colonies from the pressure of disease. That Act he (Lord Monteagle) and other friends of emigration reluctantly supported. But contemporaneously, and without being aware of what was in progress here, the colonies increased their tax on emigrants. The result of these double burdens imposed in Europe and in America, had been that the whole tide of British emigration was diverted to a foreign country. The noble Secretary for the Colonies had said that more care was taken of the emigrant in British North America than in the United States. He doubted the fact. Take the colony of New Brunswick as an instance. There a tax had been levied on emigrants for many years. What became of the produce of that tax? Was it applied to purposes calculated to relieve or forward the emigrant? No; it had been for years appropriated by the colonial legislature to colonial purposes, and the abuse was considered so gross that it had been remonstrated against by several successive governors. In New York, on the contrary, the produce of the tax was exclusively applied for the purposes of the emigrant. By looking at papers upon the subject which had been presented to the House, their Lordships would find that the system of transmitting the emigrants to the interior, of which his noble Friend boasted, had been in parts of British North America, he would not say so cruel, but so careless, so remiss, so signally defective in all the precautions that ought to have been taken even for the security of human life, as to have caused much of the disease which prevailed; they would find that the diffusion of fever in Canada was mainly attributable to the mode of transmitting the emigrants which had been adopted. The fact had been admitted by persons connected with the Government during the last Session. On the contrary, the United States provided for the proper transmission of emigrants. [Earl GREY: No, no!] He would show to his noble Friend and to the House that the cheapest, the simplest, and most effectual mode of transmitting emigrants was adopted by the United States, not by steamboats, but by railroad. In the railway acts of New York, and he believed of other States in the Union, there was a special provision made for cheap trains for the express purpose of transmitting emigrants to the interior. This duty was imposed upon the railway companies by the legislature, and by such means much more effectual assistance was given by the United States legislature than by providing those dens of fever and pestilence which had unhappily floated along the St. Lawrence, carrying death and disease into the interior of Canada. He did not mean to say that there was no hope of a better state of things in British North America. In spite of the noble Earl's speech he could not surrender this expectation. All that he desired was that the colonies should act in such a manner on the subject of emigration as should be most conducive to their own best interests. We had no right to make use of the colonies merely as a means of getting rid of an excess of population. We should never overlook or disregard colonial interests from selfish views. But our interests, so far from being conflicting, were identical. The Canadas and the other colonies in British North America admitted that the introduction of labour of a proper class, was the abundant source of improvement to the colonies themselves. There were good arguments against the emigration of 1847, when the people flocked not only in excessive numbers, but in contagion and fever, and when in some cases they were sent away without proper precautions; but there was no argument against a better and a properly-regulated system of emigration: all the calamities of the most calamitous years only proved, that the Government and the Legislature ought well to consider what that system ought to be. He was convinced that in relation to the state of Ireland—and even in relation to the state of this country — the question of colonisation was one which must force itself upon their Lordships' attention. On the next occasion their Lordships met it was his intention to move for certain returns which he believed would not be objected to, namely, a return of the number of emigrants who left our shores during the past year, and the different parts to which they went, distinguishing the number taken from Great Britain and from Ireland.

EARL GREY felt called upon to express his deep regret that his noble Friend had shown such a disposition to censure the legislatures of the British North American colonies: connected as his noble Friend was with Ireland, the speech of his noble Friend would not dispose those legislatures to receive those who sought their shores with more of friendliness. Notwithstanding all the noble Lord had said, he still maintained that the colonies had been most unjustly censured. When he recollected the sacrifices they had made in 1847; when he remembered the noble efforts they had made to mitigate the sufferings of the emigrants, and the evils of such an immigration as then took place, it was hard to censure them. In his answer to the question of the noble Lord opposite, he had confined his observations to Canada alone: his noble Friend had not followed the same course. In New Brunswick, it undoubtedly was a great abuse that the produce of the emigrant tax should be appropriated to other objects than the assistance and forwarding of the emigrants; but that abuse was put an end to by the Act of 1847. His noble Friend then went on to say, that no wonder the tax did not answer its purpose, that it was a bad financial measure, and limited emigration. He begged to inform his noble Friend, that according to the opinion of the very able gentlemen now in the government of Canada—and he could assure the House that there was no government carried on with greater discretion and ability than that of Canada—the able members of the Council of Lord Elgin, had recorded their opinion that the number of emigrants which arrived last year, was as great as the colony could receive with advantage. He spoke from memory, but he believed the number which landed in Canada was 28,000; and, of course, had the immigration been larger, and the means of affording employment being deficient, the produce of the tax was not sufficient for the purpose of providing for and forwarding the emigrants; and in fact, upwards of 1,000*l.* beyond the whole produce of the tax was so spent. His noble Friend had said the United States forwarded the emigrants from New York by means of cheap trains on railroads. There might be a law in America providing cheap trains, just as in this country we had cheap Parliamentary trains provided for a certain class of travellers; but he would venture to say that emigrants were not conveyed at a lower cost than the cost of their transport, even in America. His noble Friend had complained of the manner in which the emigrants were forwarded on the St. Lawrence; but his remarks applied to 1847, when no one denied that great evils existed—evils which it was then impossible to avoid or avert—because the immigration was excessive and unexpected. At that period there were not the means of transport upon the St. Lawrence for such numbers as then arrived; but now the great internal line of communication was completed, and emigrants, however large in number, could be forwarded in safety and comfort to the very remotest parts of the far west. Steamboats now existed on the whole route, which had been provided at the charge of the provincial government. The arrangements, as they were worked during the last year, were perfectly satisfactory; at all events no effort would be wanting on the part of Lord Elgin and his Council to render them complete. There was very little doubt that the commercial depression under which Canada, along with the rest of the world, had been suffering, would pass away, the demand for labour would increase, and emigrants would be gladly received; but no policy would be so bad as to endeavour to force the colonies to go faster than they themselves wished. If their Lordships fully looked at the papers on the table of the House, they would be astonished at the extraordinary increase which had taken place in a few years in Upper Canada, in population, in wealth, and the extent of land which had been brought into cultivation—it was daily increasing as a field for emigration. In justice to the colonies, he must again say that they did not deserve the censure which his noble Friend had cast upon them; they had always received the emigrants who sought their shores with the utmost hospitality.

LORD MONTEAGLE said, he had not cast such sweeping censure upon the colonial legislatures as his noble Friend fancied. He had spoken in strong but well-merited censure of New Brunswick. He had condemned the emigrant tax as excessive; but, as an apology, had himself suggested that the legislature had acted in ignorance of provisions made for emigration in England, while we were in ignorance of what provisions they had made in America; and the result of the mutual ignorance was, that a double burden had been thus thrown upon the unfortunate emigrants. In both cases, however, he rejoiced to state that the laws were temporary, and would soon expire.

Earl FITZWILLIAM denied that his noble Friend had cast any censure upon the colonial legislatures. His noble Friend the Secretary for the Colonies had said, the colonial government had represented that it was not desirable that any large number of emigrants should arrive in the colonies until some public works were in progress. He wished to know why such public works were not in the course of execution, seeing they would give employment to so many? The colonial legislatures ought to be encouraged to forward such works immediately.

Subject at an end.

POOR LAW (IRELAND).

The Marquess of LANSDOWNE then rose to move for a Select Committee on the operation of the Poor Law in Ireland. The noble Marquess said, that if any proof were wanting that an inquiry on the subject were necessary, he need only refer their Lordships to the two petitions which had been presented in the course of the evening, one of which prayed for inquiry into the operation of the Irish Poor Law, while the other had stigmatised that law altogether as a bad law. Would these petitioners, while thus condemning, in this sweeping manner, a measure passed under the peculiar circumstances which attended the poor-law for Ireland, desire to revert to the state of things which had existed in that country prior to legislation? Their Lordships would hardly expect him to take up the time of the House by making out what was called a Parliamentary case for the inquiry he proposed, inasmuch as it was a case so notorious, and was founded upon circumstances with which they were all so familiar, and of which they had a great knowledge. If even the poor-law had succeeded in Ireland under ordinary circumstances, he believed that some inquiry would have been rendered necessary into its operation, in consequence of the extraordinary circumstances under which it had been introduced. It was a law not brought forward after years of careful and deliberate consideration, but introduced under the pressure of great difficulty and of a great emergency arising out of the existence of a famine. He had had no hesitation in recommending the adoption of that law, but he had recommended it only as a great experiment, an experiment full of difficulty, and fraught with danger—danger to be guarded against in every way that human ingenuity could suggest, but against which it was impossible to guard effectually and absolutely, without some experience, some guide, and some practical experience of the results of the experiment they were about to make. He was not surprised, therefore, that on the first operation of that law difficulties should have arisen, or even that those difficulties should have proved great as regarded many important points; and still less was he surprised that, with respect to some points in particular, those difficulties should have been almost overwhelming. It was a law for which the country had not been prepared, which individuals in that country had had no experience of as regarded its operation. But no man could have foreseen the circumstances under which that law had been introduced; no man could have foreseen that there would suddenly occur a pressure arising out of the heavy infliction which it had pleased Providence to visit upon the land in the form of famine, and which should render the application of such a law imperative. He was not, therefore, surprised at any obstacles or difficulties that had arisen; and those extraordinary and unhappy circumstances must be taken into account. But while he admitted that in some parts of Ireland this law had not had the beneficial operation it was desired to have; yet, on the other hand, he asserted that in other parts of that country the operation had been in a great degree successful—he might say wholly and completely successful; and had it not been for circumstances fresh in the recollection of every one, the objects of the law might have been more fully carried out. But much was to be laid to the account of that which no man could foresee; and, which, even if foreseen, it was difficult to say how it could have been guarded against. That famine, and that failure of the harvest of the country, which it was hoped might be only occasional, had occurred again and again; and in the course of the past year it had, unhappily, occurred under most aggravated circumstances, in those very parts of the country the population of which depended most upon the potato, and were, consequently, suffering the greatest destitution by reason of the failure of the crop. The total failure of the crop, and the general poverty which prevailed, deprived the people of the food, and the landlords and farmers were without the means of procuring food from other places. The state of these particular districts was one most painful to contemplate; but the Government had laid it before their Lordships on undoubted authority, and in an accurate and comprehensive shape. Without going into minute details, he might observe that, taking Ireland, generally, the average amount of the poor-rate during the past year had not exceeded *2s.* 9½*d.* in the pound. There were particular districts in which it had amounted to *7s.*, to *10s.*, and to *20s.*; and he had now before him a return by which it appeared that in one union—that of Clifden —the amount was *2l.* *3s.* *1d.* in the pound. This was a state of things that required the attention of Parliament, and was one of the reasons why he moved for the appointment of this Committee. He was not prepared then, at the moment he was proposing the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the administration of the Irish Poor Law, to offer any suggestion as to specific alterations and amendments to be adopted. Their Lordships must not, however, on that account, suppose that Her Majesty's Government were indifferent to the subject, or that they had been inattentive to the various representations which had been addressed to them on the subject by official personages and individuals with respect to the working of the poor-law in Ireland; those representations would receive due and deliberate consideration in proposing or making any alterations in the provisions of that Act. An opinion had been entertained in that House that it was unwise to disturb the electoral boundaries as they existed before the poor-law. All that Parliament could do at the time was to avail themselves of the best existing divisions. But a Commission was appointed for the purpose of revising the electoral boundaries, and at the head of it was placed Major Larcom, a very able officer, who had since made a very clear and detailed report on the subject to the Government. That report, however, had been sent back to Ireland for the purpose of having some additions made to it; but he hoped very shortly to lay it before Parliament in a complete state, when the Committee would have the advantage of its contents to aid them in their deliberations and conclusions. There were other matters to which the attention of the Committee would of course be directed. One of these would be how far it would be desirable to renew the appointments of vice-guardians in some districts, and under what circumstances that should be done, in preference to having recourse to the old system of electing guardians. He would abstain, as he said before, from laying down any rule for the guidance of the Committee, but he trusted that they would divide the general question submitted to them for consideration into parts, and make each part the subject of an early and separate report to the House. He proposed that the Committee should be composed of noble Lords connected with Ireland, who had a practical knowledge of the working of the poor-law in that country, and of certain English Lords who had given their attention to the operation of the law generally throughout the United Kingdom. The noble Marquess concluded by moving—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to Inquire into the Operation of the Irish Poor Law; and the Expediency of making any Amendments in its Enactments."

Lord STANLEY said, that if on the present occasion he had followed the dictation of his own inclination, he should have been disposed, notwithstanding the opinions expressed by the noble Marquess, rather to have referred to the prayer of the petition from Limerick than to the petition presented by his noble Friend near him from another part of Ireland, calling upon their Lordships to appoint a Committee to inquire into the operation of the Irish Poor Law, in order to show that a remedy for the evils existing in that law was immediately required at the hands of Parliament. But, if, in deference to the opinions of those who anticipated more practical advantages from the appointment of this Committee than, he confessed, he was able to anticipate—if in deference to their opinions he abstained from offering any opposition to the Motion of the noble Marquess, he could not refrain from expressing the deep dissatisfaction he felt upon hearing the speech of the noble Marquess. His conviction was, that the appointment of this Committee would tend to a postponement of the consideration of the Irish Poor Law to an indefinite period, and thus defer the application of remedies to an acknowledged and most urgent evil. It was, in his opinion, a question which ought not to be delegated to a Parliamentary Committee. It was a question which more properly belonged to the Executive Government to determine; it was their duty to determine it, and to submit a measure upon the subject for the consideration of Parliament. He considered that there were many cases, in which, previous to the alteration of an important law, inquiry by a Committee was desirable. If any Member of the Legislature, unconnected with the Government of the day, was desirous of proving to the House and to the country, and more especially to those through whom the amendment of the law could be effective, the mischievous operation, or the dangerous working of a particular law, he could conceive no mode in which the end could be more properly attained, or judiciously aimed at, than the appointment of a Committee, by which the opportunity was given of bringing before the Government and the public those facts with which they were imperfectly acquainted, and upon the perfect knowledge of which legislation should be based. At the time of the introduction of the English new Poor Law in 1834, the Government, contemplating a great and extensive amendment of an important law of the land, thought that, previously to introducing that amendment, it was necessary for them to enlighten and instruct the public mind, and to convince the people, not only of the magnitude of the evil, but of the applicability and fitness of the remedy they were prepared to administer. In that case, and in other cases also, the conduct of the Government of the day, in proposing a preliminary appointment of a Committee—preliminary he meant to the introduction of the legislative measure—was a wise, judicious, and perfectly proper course; but in the case now before their Lordships, there was no new information to be obtained. The facts were plain, palpable and notorious; notorious to every man who had the misfortune to be connected with a great portion—he was not speaking of the north or east, but of the south and the west of Ireland. The facts were notorious and palpable, in fact, to every man who had taken the trouble to inquire into the subject; they were to be met with in the most alarming form in the papers which Her Majesty's Government themselves had laid upon the table of the House. The Government were in a position to obtain information in reference to this important subject, of far more value than any information that could possibly be collected by the most impartial Committee. Her Majesty's Government required nothing to guide their judgments, except the power of their own minds for making those minds up upon the facts before them; and he could not help thinking that they were shifting upon a Committee that which they, as the responsible Ministers of the Crown, ought themselves to undertake—it was their undoubted province to undertake it, and, possessing the information they did on the subject, to submit the case for the consideration of Parliament. That was the course which ought to be pursued. A Committee might be useful for the purpose of investigating details, but any great principle upon which a law was to be amended ought to originate with the Government, to which was confided the responsibility of conducting the affairs of the country. He had already said that he was not referring to certain parts in the north and east of Ireland, but as regarded that part with which he was best acquainted, personally, —and he believed that the remark was equally applicable to the whole of the south and west—he did not hesitate to say that, making every allowance for the circumstances to which the noble Marquess had properly adverted, such as the difficulties thrown in the way of the administration of the poor-law by the unhappy famine and failure of the crop of the people's food which had prevailed during the last two or three years, and making every allowance for additional obstacles arising out of such a state of things, he declared that the poor-law in the south and west of Ireland had broken down, and had proved a failure from first to last. And if he wanted to prove that the poor-law in these districts, and in many parts of Ireland, had been a failure, he should refer, not to what the noble Marquess had alluded to—that upon the whole rated property of the country the burden had upon the average been only *2s.* 9½*d.* in the pound; for although the rating might be only *3s.*, or *4s.*, or *5s.* upon the whole rated property of a union, yet the amount levied—he had almost used the word extorted—from those unable to pay, yet willing to meet a just demand to the utmost of their ability, and holding a very small proportion, indeed, of the whole property of the union—upon those who were able and willing to pay, the real amount levied had been more than double, and in many instances treble and fourfold, what had appeared on the papers. He would take this case. There was one union mentioned in these papers, 11-19ths of the lands of which was waste and desolate, yet these 11-19ths were taken into consideration when a rate was levied. The whole rate was charged on the 11-19ths, while it was paid by only the 8-19ths of the union, and consequently, the 11-19ths were included when they spoke of the amount of rates levied on the union, although this enormous portion of it had not contributed to the rate at all. He found ample evidence of the failure of this law, in looking into the statements which appeared in the papers that had been laid on the table within the last two days by the Government—he found by those papers that there were 130 unions, of which there were 117 in debt beyond the means of meeting their engagements. He found that the debt of these 117 amounted to no less a sum than 252,000*l.*, exclusive of every amount of assistance, of whatever sort or kind, derived in the shape of loans or advances from the Government or the British Charitable Association. He found that the amount of these loans over and above this debt was 241,000*l.* more—making together nearly 500,000*l.* of debt beyond their means of meeting. He found that even that amount did not measure the whole of the liability, or rather of their inability to meet their obligations, which this poor-law had cast upon them; for even with that enormous amount there was excluded from their consideration the amount of food and clothing —the 200,000 children in the schools who were supported independently of this money who were brought up by the British Charitable Association. He found a further proof of the failure of this law in the fact that there were 28 unions that had received amongst them an amount in the way of assistance of 190,000*l.* There were 20 unions which were confessedly by the report of the Commissioners themselves in a state of bankruptcy. He found that there were ten more in a state fast approaching to bankruptcy. He found that there were 21 unions the valuation of the property in which amounted to 422,000*l.*, and yet they had paid no less than 220,000*l.*, for poor relief, being after the enormous rate of 10*s.* in the pound, or 50 per cent on the rental. Their Lordships would see how largely the proprietors in these unions must have been made to pay, over and above the contributions to which they had been fairly assessed for their respective properties, to make good the deficient means or the neglected liabilities of others. It remained for him to add that of the unions where the law had proved so signal a failure in its operation, only 48,000*l.* had been actually received out of assessments raised within them; the remainder of the rates which had been declared had been supplied either by advances from Her Majesty's Treasury, or from the contributions of private and charitable sources. He did not mean to argue that any doubt could be entertained that much of the disability or disinclination to pay the rates assessed under the poor-law must have arisen out of the unexampled distress, the famine, and the misery under which Ireland had been so recently and so severely suffering. But what answer had Her Majesty's Government to make to this assertion, to which he believed he might challenge contradiction, namely, that out of 131 unions in Ireland, Her Majesty's Commissioners had been compelled, practically, to abolish the system of the poor-law in that country in 36? Now he, for one, did contend that the electoral system, upon which the board of guardians, appointed to watch over and be responsible for the due administration of the assessments for the relief of the poor contributed by the ratepayers, were by those ratepayers elected, was the fundamental and vital principle of the general amended poor-law that Parliament had passed in 1834. To supersede these boards of guardians by commissioners appointed by and acting under instructions from the Government, was a manifest and a fatal infraction of that principle. For what was the constitution of the board of poor-law guardians, as contemplated by that Act? This—namely, that it was to be a body of individual ratepayers of the district, clothed with the power of taxation for certain defined and limited objects, but wholly independent of the Government of the Crown. To replace them by a body of commissioners directly under the control and appointed by the nomination of that Government, was utterly to repudiate the electoral principle, essential, as he would again contend, to the very elements of the poor-law of 1834, and all other measures founded on its objects. In truth the Irish poor-law had been so completely vitiated by proceedings of this nature that he ought rather to say the poor-law as it practically exists in England is inconsistent with the sort of poor-law practically administered in Ireland. It was a fact beyond dispute that in two-sevenths of all the unions of

Ireland, Her Majesty's Government had been under the positive necessity of superseding the whole machinery and action of their new system of poor-law for that part of the empire. No further argument, surely, could be necessary to show that, with regard to a very large portion of Ireland, the further administration of the existing Irish Poor Law was found to be impracticable. He pressed this on the attention of noble Lords, because the fact justified his predictions of the fate of this measure. There were those both in and out of their Lordships' House who were well qualified to speak to such a point, and he had repeatedly told noble Lords, when the Irish Poor Law was first submitted to them, that it must fail from the want of the adequate physical, and he would even venture now to add the moral machinery necessary to ensure its efficient practical administration. Yet Her Majesty's Government had persisted in introducing this poor-law into Ireland, utterly regardless of the wide difference between the state of society existing in England from the state of society existing in Ireland. The condition of society in England alone, he would fearlessly state, had made it possible to administer the present poor-law here. In Ireland the condition of society rendered the practical success of the working of such a measure hopeless. Let them only look at some of the elementary differences on the very surface of the social aspects respectively presented by the two countries, and noble Lords would find that it was not at all surprising that any poor-law should have proved a failure in Ireland, with whatever success it might have operated in England. In England, for example, as he believed, the numbers of small properties in fee-simple—although he was aware that there might be a greater class of large owners of such property here than in Ireland—much exceeded the numbers of small proprietors in fee in Ireland. In England, again, in every union there was a considerable number of such small proprietors in fee. All of them had — as he himself and every noble Lord who heard him must have had opportunities of remarking—a considerable and a direct interest in the well-being of the labouring poor within the areas of such unions. The whole framework and action, indeed, of the new poor-law depended on the harmonious co-operation of the landlords themselves, and the occupiers, not only in properly cultivating the land, but in keeping labourers employed upon it. Our poor-law could not subsist for one moment without this union of action between the landlord and the tenant, the proprietor and the farmer. When noble Lords spoke, therefore, of landlords and tenants in England and in Ireland, they spoke of two very different classes of men. In England they had the assistance in the administration of their poor-law of a considerable body of tenant-farmers who were possessed—who had once been possessed — of competent capitals — most of them employers themselves of agricultural labour, and most of them, he believed, chargeable in their own person, as occupiers, with the poor-rate assessed on the properties held by them; such rates being of course in proportion to the good or bad cultivation of their lands, and the number of heads engaged in that cultivation. There was another significant distinction to be taken in noting the differences between the same classes of persons in the two countries. In England the landlord was the real possessor of the land. He was not only responsible for the demands of the law upon it, but he had the power of enforcing the rights of his property. He spoke not of physical, but of legal rights; and in England a landlord, so far from being complained of for venturing to enforce them by law, whilst he discharged his own duties to his tenant, would be complained of only as wanting in his duties to himself and to the public at large, if he did not compel the occupier to look after the due cultivation of his land, and the employment of agricultural labourers upon it. That could scarcely be said to be the case in Ireland. The English landlord, above all, could compel the tenant to the employment of so much labour as was necessary to the proper cultivation of the soil occupied by such tenant. More than this—however punctual the tenant might be in the payment of his rent, yet if he failed in this contract of proper cultivation, and the employment of the labour required thereby, no man in England would feel a moment's indignation, if the landlord, finding his land growing out of heart, for want of being properly attended to, were to give such negligent tenant notice to quit, and in due time replace him by some other who would be more able and willing to do justice to the land, and put the proper number of labourers upon it. Now this was the state of the law—this the practice pursued in England. You begin by arming the landlord with sufficient power to compel the due cultivation of his property; you may make him responsible through those who occupy under him for the assessments upon it; and you practically conclude by making it the common interest of landlord and tenant, proprietor and occupier, to lighten the burden of unoccupied pauper labour, and to watch over the due assessment and administration of the funds levied for the relief of the poor. But in Ireland their Lordships would find the fee-simple of property in few hands, comparatively speaking; the fee proprietors generally very much embarrassed; their lands ill cultivated; and most of the landlords (he himself must plead guilty to being often one of this class) absentees —or habitually non-resident on their estates. Under these circumstances there could be no effectual co-operation in the objects of such a law as this between the landlords of Ireland, generally, and their tenants, or those who occupied rather than cultivated the land. In fact, as a rule, there was not to be found in that country those classes which we had in England, the existence of which was so essential to the due and practical administration of the poor-laws. There was not between the capital and labour of the country that class of persons to be found in Ireland which was represented by the substantial tenant-farmers in England. Between the landlord and tenant in Ireland there was in the great mass of cases a class that was called here by the name of a mere cottier tenantry — something above the class of labourers. And, from the strange notion of dignity that was attached to the possession of land, these persons would prefer to have three acres of land under their own immediate control, than habitual employment as labourers, although in intelligence or substance they were not one step above those labourers — he was going to say whom they employed — but whom from the poverty of their circumstances they were wholly unable to employ. This class of persons occupied such minute subdivisions of land as to render the proper cultivation of the soil impossible, either by themselves, or any one else. Now observe the difference here between the state of society in both countries. While in England the occupier was chargeable with the rates, in Ireland the rates were imposed by the occupier, but the burden of them was borne, not by the occupier, but the landlord. Now recollect this, whatever might be the abuse of property with which an Irish landlord might be justly charged, whatever faults might be alleged against him, the landlord, in the south and west of Ireland, at all events, was no more than the chief renter upon the property he held. In these small holdings it was not possible for him to exercise the rights of a landlord, nor was it possible for him to turn out the most lazy, disgraceful, and improvident tenant, even for the purpose of securing the proper cultivation of the land, by placing a man of industry and capital in his stead. He stated this fact as principally applicable to large portions of the south of Ireland; and he was convinced he should be borne out in the truth of this statement by the testimony of many of their Lordships who were now listening to him. Under these circumstances what hope was there that the law would ever be practically carried out? He recollected many material alterations that had been made in these laws. It was prophesied both in this and the other House of Parliament that the result of these alterations would be that the tenant would find it to be to his interest to employ a large additional amount of labour. He had taken the liberty of showing the fallacy of these anticipations. He had stated that this class in Ireland would not only not employ an extra number of hands, but they would actually diminish the amount of the labour that they had engaged. The result had proved the accuracy of that declaration. They not only had not employed such extra labour, but their circumstances did not permit them to employ as much as they were accustomed formerly to do. The landlord had not the real possession of his land in Ireland. The tenant was unable to employ labour himself. Under such circumstances how was it possible that there could be an increased amount of labour. That which was the mainstay of the English poor-law—combined exertion for the purpose of advancing their common interest—was wholly wanting in Ireland. That this was a true picture of the condition of a great part of Ireland, he should be borne out by many noble Lords who heard him in asserting. Under these conditions, he believed it would be thought little matter of wonder that there should have been found no practical working for the present poor-law in Ireland. This result had been clearly foretold by the best authorities in both Houses of Parliament when that law was first brought forward. The only improvement it would be possible to effect in the condition of the landlords would be to guarantee them the means of compelling the employment of labour on their property by their tenants. But who would suppose that such a measure was practicable in the existing condition of society, and of the relations between tenant and landlord in Ireland? But the poor-law having proved a failure, what were Her Majesty's Government prepared to substitute for it? The only substitute he could think of would be, if it were possible, to individualise labour and responsibility among landlords and occupiers. Their Lordships' Committee might inquire into the state and working of the poor-law in Ireland, though he could not imagine what practical good could result from such a course in the face of the facts on that subject already reported to the House, and showing the incompatibility of such a law with the state of such a country. But any such proposition as he had heard of for altering the limits of the existing electoral districts of unions, individualising responsibility, and remodelling assessments, on a principle not hitherto acted on — noble Lords might depend on it that all their attempts to botch up a law so radically defective in all the elements of practical working would terminate in utter failure. He had heard many complaints of the extent of the Irish unions, and he was disposed to think that in many instances they were too large—inconveniently, and even oppressively large; but, considering the large amount of capital already expended in Ireland on their organisation, and that there certainly was great economy in centralising as much as possible their areas, he was disposed to consider that it might be advantageous rather to adopt new centres for such unions, radiating to smaller circumferences, than those now in existence, but without abandoning the old ones, to which more contracted areas might, perhaps, be conveniently adapted. But he begged to impress upon the noble Lords the consideration that, after all, the size of the areas of unions, though not an unimportant feature in itself in the details of the working of the law, was of no consequence, no weight, or relation to the importance of reinstating the electoral principle in the constitution of boards of guardians. The noble Marquess said, that there would shortly be laid before them a report, by an able officer, upon this subject, of the diminution of the area of taxation, or a new arrangement of the electoral divisions. He (Lord Stanley) had no doubt whatever that that gentleman, Major Larcom, would most ably and punctually execute the instructions given to him. But what he wanted to know—and this must be decided by the Government—was this: upon what principle was this remodelling of the electoral divisions to take place? He cared not for minor details, provided he knew the exact principle upon which the Government proposed to act in respect to this matter. He wanted to know, was it to be upon that principle which he conceived to be so necessary — namely, that of individualising responsibility? If it were not upon this principle, it would be worth nothing. But they had also heard great remonstrances on the subject of the extreme inequality between the assessments levied on one tenant and those levied on another. They were now told that the principle of those assessments should be as much as possible equalisation of population and property. The noble Marquess had said that this was no new principle. Now he (Lord Stanley) wanted to know in what way this principle was to be carried out. He wished to know whether Her Majesty's Government had issued instructions as a whole—not as an individual suggestion for an isolated case, but as a general rule; and whether the noble Marquess meant to say, by equalisation, that all the properties within one and the same district should be assessed on their respective assessments to the general property, or rental of it after one and the same rate. Let him explain himself by supposing a case: that, side by side, there should be two properties; the one administered under an embarrassed, needy, reckless landlord, careless of the state of the land, reckless of the condition of his wretched tenantry: the other, administered by an active and careful proprietor, who, for twenty or twenty-five years, has devoted unremitting attention to the improvement of his property, and the bettering the condition of his tenantry, providing employment for them, and expending his capital upon the improvement of the land and all upon it; not with a view to raise his own immediate rents, but to prevent, as far as in him lay, the accumulation of paupers on the estate, and the consequent burden their support must entail on the district; and to insure the comparative happiness of those engaged in various labours upon it. If, by the effect of his own exertions to maintain this improved condition, it were found that the levy or assessment for poor-rate was but small; whereas, in consequence of the same want of management and attention, the other and perhaps larger property was assessed at the same time to a much larger amount, owing to the greater quantity of paupers or unemployed labourers upon it, or any other such cause—in such a case, was it meant to be said that the better landlord, because he had been hitherto more lightly rated, not in consequence but in spite of the proximity of the worse — that because his assessment amounted to, say but 1*s*. in the pound, and the negligent landlord's to 5*s*. in the pound —should henceforth be rated at the heavier assessment, on no other ground than that by reason of neighbourhood his property should pay to the general assessment of the district equally with the others? Why, this would be a monstrous proceeding; and yet he inferred from the statement of noble Lords opposite that it was to be enforced, on the ground of "economy," against the better landlord. If he rightly understood, that the new principle in contemplation was thus to equalise rates on populations and properties, he could only say, that they would effectually discourage all attempts to retrieve the miserable condition of Ireland by "equalising" the liabilities of good with those of bad landlords. He could imagine no proposition more replete with gross injustice and with gross impolicy. But, after all, let the faults of the landlords of Ireland, as a class, have been what they might, they had been severely punished, and were still dearly paying for them; and they were faults for which they themselves were neither directly nor altogether indirectly responsible. There were men among them labouring honestly and most strenuously for the improvement of Ireland, and men who were actuated by that generous devotion to her best interests the consciousness of which alone could have sustained them under the cruel reverses against which they had had to contend. Convinced as he was of the utter hopelessness of any attempt to persist in the endeavour to work the present Poor Law (Ireland) Bill, he cautioned noble Lords to beware how they further legislated for the relief of the poor in that country without taking into their most serious consideration the very great difference between its condition and the possibility of finding the machinery necessary for such a law, as compared with the condition of England. The cost of that machinery and the abandonment of the great electoral principle of the new poor-law for England, condemned this law. It did not work—it could not work—it ought not to work. To persevere on the new principles, however, to which he had been addressing himself, could only lead to this result—their new Irish Poor Law must sink in the general ruin which had overtaken the most reckless of the Irish landlords, all those who might have been or still were most disposed to exert themselves for the amelioration of the domestic condition of Ireland. Her Majesty's Government had not yet stated what the objects specifically were in the contemplated alterations to which they were prepared to give their support, or what the nature of the amendments they desired noble Lords to sanction in the existing Act. However undesirable he might think it for Her Majesty's Ministers to delegate the recommendation of such amendments to a Committee, and throwing the whole onus of the responsibility for the Committee's recommendations on their own shoulders, he yet felt it his duty, as a Peer of the realm, here, in his place, and as an Irish proprietor, than whom no Irishman in that House or elsewhere could be more deeply solicitous than he was for the welfare of so important a portion of the empire—he felt bound to say that this poor-law might have been expected, from the first, to fail—as it had failed—by persisting in the course upon which they had attempted to carry it out. The point for which he contended was, that the principle of any amended measure ought to be—to give to the proprietors of the soil a direct personal interest in the careful cultivation of the land, the employment of labour in their own districts, and the administration of the relief funds—not to unite in the same category such landlords with those who were as unwilling as unable to accomplish these great objects, by subjecting them to one and the same scale of assessment. They had been told by a noble Lord that at the rate of increase which the poor relief assessment was now proceeding on in Ireland, the whole rental of that kingdom would soon prove unequal to supply the fund for such assessment. If this opinion was well founded (he heartily trusted it was not), nothing of course remained to the unfortunate Irish landlords but to fold their arms in despair, and await the disastrous issue. But he (Lord Stanley), for one, did not think the problem of Irish re-establishment impossible, even now, to be solved. The means, however difficult to be found, might consist in diffusing the relief assessment over the whole property of Ireland, to accelerate the progress of social improvement—to encourage its farming industry, and to improve the condition of the relations between landlord and tenant. As an Irish proprietor he would say, that if he could secure by any means such objects to be accomplished, if he could be secured from being held responsible for others, he would willingly consent to be responsible—in consideration of the boon they would confer on his own and all other Irish property—to take on himself the entire charge and responsibility of all paupers on his estate. But he was not prepared to pay assessments for such a purpose on the iniquitous principle they had heard advanced of equalising property and population in the new rating. Let him only have the security that such should be the object, and such the applicction of any tax or rate; and for such a boon, he repeated, he would gladly contribute—say an additional 6*d.* or 1*s.* in the pound, on his own assessment, towards a fund in aid. He cared not to what imputations he might expose himself by such a proposal—he knew what were his own intentions in making it. If he was told that there were insolvent unions involved—say to the extent of 500,000*l.*—a rate of this amount on all the rental of Ireland would more than pay their involvements off. To such a rate, then, or even a much heavier one, he would cheerfully assent, for it would tend, not to his benefit alone, but to that of Ireland at large. There was no English Member of either House of Parliament who was more profoundly interested than himself in the welfare of that country, and he should say some such system was quite practicable. In the thirty-eight unions which he had referred to, it had been found necessary to supersede the boards of guardians by paid commissioners nominated by the Government. Whatever his objections to this arrangement, his own impression was, that Government would be obliged to continue, and even to extend, the plan. His great object, however—and one in which he was sure every landed proprietor in that House would concur—was, that the principle of contribution to poor relief should be carefully considered and distinctly stated—not left to the application of those new propositions of equalisation to which he had referred. It was all important to maintain, if possible, the electoral principle, and the liability to control in the application of the assessments. His next proposition would be, that, supposing such a fund in aid of involved unions as he had suggested could be raised from advances, it should be made for their relief under the sanction and direction of the board of guardians; that such advances should be limited to cases where the rates had risen to such an excessive scale as 5*s.* or 7*s.* in the pound, or upwards; and where, consequently, it must be assumed that a new state of things had arisen in the district differing from any which it was ever contemplated the board would have to deal with. In reference to this scheme, too, it would be highly necessary that the paid commissioners should be replaced by elected guardians; but, in any case, it would be for the Government to devise all necessary securities for the due application of such advances. There was no doubt that electoral guardians would not be so attentive to the discharge of their duties, or so generally active, as guardians appointed by the Poor Law Commissioners, and paid for their services. And then it might be asked, how, if you appoint paid guardians, can you possibly reduce the amount of expenses in those districts? It did not at all necessarily follow that the expenses should be kept up in consequence of paid guardians being employed. In many instances it was a matter of unavoidable necessity, but then it did not always entail increased expenses. In one case which he could mention, so great was the improvement in the management of the district, that the expenses were reduced from 690*l.* to 60*l.* or 70*l.* a year. It might be said, an isolated instance would not justify a general principle; and it might be asked, what changes could be devised for the permanent relief of those pauperised districts. Then they should perhaps be driven to the necessity of looking to those means of general relief, with respect to which, although each was totally different from the other, and calculated for very different purposes, there was more diversity of opinion—more contrary and discordant views, than with respect to any other two subjects whatsoever. Each of these means had warm supporters and zealous partisans, some right in many of the reasons they assigned in support of their views, and others of course egregiously wrong. He need hardly say, he alluded to the two important subjects of emigration and the improvement of waste lands at home. These two remedies, for the relief of such general and deplorable distress as existed in Ireland, were in no manner inconsistent. The papers upon their Lordships' table showed that two cases did exist at that moment, for the relief of which each of those two measures, separately, would be for each form of distress the most appropriate mode of applying relief. Emigration might be resorted to when the population became so superabundant that the soil was incapable of supplying them with sufficient food, and home colonisation when the population was barely sufficient for the cultivation of the soil, but superabundant for the extent of capital employed upon its improvement. People were heard to argue against emigration and in favour of home colonisation, as if one was inconsistent with the other. He admitted that there were many districts in Ireland where emigration might be, and perhaps was, the only mode of leading to permanent improvement in the land. On the other hand, there were districts where the reclamation of the extensive tracts of waste lands, of which so large a part of Ireland consisted, might be properly made the means of relieving and employing the labouring population. As to the cost of emigration, he presumed that the expenses of carrying out an emigrant to one of the British North American colonies could not greatly exceed 3*l.*, or at most 4*l.* a head. Some three years ago, 4*l.* was considered a fair average charge per head for carrying an emigrant to any of our American colonies. In the papers before the House it would be found that 1*s.* 3*d.* per week was the average cost per head for the maintenance of paupers in Ireland. It therefore appeared that the cost of maintaining a single pauper for one year, being less than 3*l.* 10*s.*, would be very nearly sufficient to relieve the union altogether from the burden of his maintenance, and enable him to go to another part of Her Majesty's dominions, where he would in all probability be more prosperous. God forbid he should suggest any undue compulsion, or anything of the sort! He did not advocate any extensive system of colonisation or emigration; but where the expenses of transferring a pauper to one of our American colonies so very little exceeded the cost of even one year's maintenance, he thought it would be of advantage to many of the unions to consider the question. He believed it was the opinion, generally speaking, of the paid guardians, who, no doubt, turned their serious attention to the matter, that the removal to another country of a large portion of the poor people of Ireland, instead of increasing the rates, would very considerably reduce them. But then there were districts in which the people might find employment at home. It was a very singular and lamentable feature in the present condition of Ireland, that in many unions there were large districts lying waste and totally uncultivated—not land never brought into cultivation before, but waste and desolate, as an unavoidable consequence of the present unfortunate state in which the country was. The labourers, the tenants, and in many instances persons of some consideration, had collected together the whole of their property, and, without the slightest reference to the claims of the landlord or their other obligations, had, after selling it, emigrated, leaving the landlord large portions of his estate in an abandoned condition, and charged with a large arrear of poor and other rates. What was to become of lands so situated? How could they be let? If they were let to a solvent tenant, his stock would be instantly distrained, and all his property found upon such lands would be seized and sold for the payment of that arrear. The lands would therefore remain waste, and unless something was forthwith done to remedy the evil, it would be perpetuated to such an extent that no remedy could remove or palliate it. He knew of one union, that of Clifden, in which eleven-nineteenths of the land, which was the only source of food for man and beast in that district, were not only lying wholly waste and uncultivated, with large arrears of rates due upon it, but must so lie under the penalty that the first man who took any part of that land would of course have his stock immediately seized upon and sold for that arrear. Again, in the union of Ballina, in the county of Mayo, he would refer to a case which might show the condition in which that district was; he meant the case of a Mrs. Bingham, who, although holding a considerable quantity of land, had no means of paying her rates, and had nothing to live upon, being almost in a state of destitution. A portion of the land which was left uncultivated having at length been let to a solvent tenant, the tenant immediately had his whole stock seized upon for the arrears by the Poor Law Commissioners; and that statement was received with much approbation in another place, as a proof of the extraordinary diligence and activity with which the collectors of the poor-rates in Ireland discharged their duties. No arrangement between landlords and their tenantry could obviate that new difficulty. It was not only a dangerous, but a growing, a daily increasing difficulty, and productive of the worst possible consequences. It would greatly increase the number of people who were unable to pay rates—it would render the land less valuable year after year, and entail innumerable disadvantages, not only upon the proprietors and occupiers of land, but upon all classes of society in Ireland. The question was, how could such a difficulty as that be properly met? He was opposed, upon principle, to the proposition of the Government, upon their own responsibility, taking into their possession, or taking into their own hands, the management of large districts of waste lands for the cultivation or improvement of them. He thought such a course was in itself a dangerous thing. In such unions as Kilrush, for instance, where the bulk of the population was not larger than would be necessary to cultivate the land properly, but where there was a large number of paupers and labourers half employed, and consequently on the verge of pauperism, it might be proper to purchase tracts of land, or allow and encourage the landlords to lease it to the Poor Law Commissioners, or to the paid guardians of unions upon certain terms. It might, for example, be proper to permit the guardians to hold their lands free from the payment of rates, that they should be authorised to let them, and that their lessees should likewise be exempted from the payment of rates. That was one mode in which the present alarming obstacle to the cultivation of land in Ireland might be got over. Suppose 100 acres of land now lying waste, and likely to remain so, from the circumstances he had mentioned, were properly cultivated under some arrangement such as he had suggested, would not the advantage accruing not only to the poor-law unions in general, but to the people employed, the proprietors, and the inhabitants, be very considerable? The paid guardians might be at liberty to employ the paupers of the union in the cultivation of the land, or they might be empowered to let it to others free from the present arrears of rates, the payment of which prevented solvent tenants now from incurring the risk of taking it. It might also be arranged that whatever rent was reserved to the landlords should be retained by the guardians for a reasonable time if necessary, and be made available for such rate as the landlord or proprietor in fee should be properly chargeable with, respecting any other portion of his estates. That would in a great measure remove the present obstacle to the cultivation of the soil, and it would greatly facilitate the collection of the rates; because the guardians might apply the rent of such lands as they obtained leases of, to the discharge of rates due upon any other part of the landlord's estates situated within the union, while many solvent persons, who now object to encounter the enormous arrears due, would readily become tenants upon the condition that they should be exempted from the payment of that arrear. He did not say that this mode of meeting the difficulty to which he had adverted was not open to objections; but, at all events, it was susceptible of improvement. It was the only mode he could conceive of bringing the area of Ireland into cultivation, and permanently improving the condition of the people, by employing them. He owed many apologies to the House for having trespassed so long upon their Lordships' patience. But the state of Ireland appeared to him to be so alarming, and the total absence of any fixed principle with respect to the poor-law was so objectionable, that he felt it to be his imperative duty to lay before the House, *valeat quantum,* the plans which appeared to his mind best and most practicable. He had heard a great deal said about saddling mortgagees and all incumbrancers upon land in Ireland, with poor's rates; but he thought such a course would be most unjust and impolitic. The consequences would be, that mortgagees would instantly institute proceedings to raise the amount of their mortgages, expensive proceedings would be resorted to, the proprietors of encumbered estates would be crushed or ruined, and no relief whatever would be obtained by such a measure. Whatever might be said with respect to the taxation of rent charges, dowers, annuities, and other charges upon land created by family settlements in many instances, there was no doubt, if rates were imposed upon such incomes, they would far exceed the whole of the proceeds of many estates in Ireland. He did not wish to express any positive opinion upon the subject, but he thought the suggestions he had made worth consideration. Every one would admit the wide distinction which existed between mortgagees and such incumbrancers as he had previously mentioned. He did not intend, as he had already stated, to offer any opposition to the appointment of the Committee, although he should confess it appeared to him to be a very hopeless mode of meeting the question. The appointment of a Committee—launching them upon such a sea, without rudder or anything else to guide them—was, in his opinion, of no use whatever. It was of the most vital importance that some remedy should be administered—some decisive step taken immediately to arrest the progress of the evil, so that those who still laboured in Ireland to keep their heads above water, in the hope that practical and decisive means would be adopted for their assistance, might know whether they were to be assisted or left to their impending ruinous fate. Above all, he implored their Lordships' co-operation with the landed proprietors of Ireland, who were sinking deeper every day in the scale of society. Their Lordships would expect in return that the landlords of Ireland would use every effort of which they were capable; but impossibilities ought not to be required of them. They were the natural guardians of their tenantry; and if they were suffered to fall—if their influence was paralysed—the interests of the people generally must be affected.

The Marquess of LONDONDERRY had no intention of trespassing on their Lordships at any length; but he should deem himself an unworthy listener to the able speech of his noble Friend who had just sat down, if he failed to offer his humble testimony to the truth of the statement of his noble Friend with respect to the state of Ireland; and he felt confident that the views thrown out by him, when they became known in Ireland, would enhance the high position in which the noble Lord stood in that country, both as a landlord and as an individual. What he (the Marquess of Londonderry) complained of was, that Her Majesty's Government on so important a subject should have proposed no definitive plan. The difference of opinion on Irish matters was so great that the result of appointing a Committee would be, that they would never arrive at any conclusion at all. It would be impossible to devise a remedy for the evils in one part of Ireland which would be equally applicable to others; evidence would be heard from all quarters—different remedies suggested; and the consequence would be that nothing would be done. As a friend of a well-administered system of poor-laws in Ireland, and one who thought that measures might be framed which would remove many of the evils which at present existed, he protested against delay, and implored Her Majesty's Government, especially those who were Irish proprietors, to put their shoulders to the wheel, and bring forward such a measure as would enable landlords who were anxious for the prosperity of their tenantry to make it their own business to superintend and improve the condition of their estates.

The Marquess of CLANRICARDE had heard with great satisfaction the declaration of the noble Lord opposite (Lord Stanley), that it was not his intention to oppose the appointment of a Committee; and, in fact, if he (the Marquess of Clanricarde) had entertained any doubt as to the wisdom of the course pursued by the Government, that doubt would have been removed by the speech of the noble Lord. The noble Marquess had told them that it would be impossible for a Committee to arrive at any conclusion, in consequence of the difference of opinion which prevailed as to the remedies which the state of Ireland required; but the noble Lord who preceded him, in censuring the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government, certainly had said nothing to induce them to believe that any other course which they might have proposed would have met with his especial favour; and in speaking of remedies to be applied, with all that skill and ability which belonged to him, there was hardly one topic on which he touched on which he would not find a greater difference of opinion than on the proposal of the Government. He differed from the noble Lord in the view which he took of the constitutional duties of a Government. To him (the Marquess of Clanricarde) it appeared no part of the duty of the Executive Government, on every subject concerning the welfare of the country, to propose changes of the law. He knew not where the noble Lord had got that doctrine; and certainly did not think he would find it supported by the best authorities. Undoubtedly where great principles of policy were contested, he agreed that it was quite right for men possessed of that influence in the legislative assembly derived from office, and identified with the advocacy of certain principles, not to shrink from carrying out those principles by means of the support and influence which they enjoyed. But on a question of this kind, where no such principles were involved, he denied that it was the duty of Government to propose special laws to Parliament. The noble Lord had referred to the question of the area of taxation, without, however, pointing out the exact course which he would wish to recommend. He (the Marquess of Clanricarde) denied that the Government had failed to pay attention to that subject. A report had been made on the subject, to which the attention of the Committee would be immediately drawn. He agreed with the noble Lord that it was desirable to stimulate individual exertion in order to provide employment for the people; but it might be carried to excess. He denied that the poor-law had totally failed in Ireland.

Lord STANLEY said, he had referred only to that part of Ireland with which he himself was connected, and had not alluded to the north of Ireland.

The Marquess of CLANRICARDE begged the noble Lord's pardon for having given too extended a bearing to his observations; but he felt compelled to say, in spite of all the prejudice which he once felt against it, that the law had worked well in other parts of Ireland besides the north. In the west of Ireland, in 1845, the poor-law was working very smoothly and well. Until the famine came, there had been no just complaint of any extraordinary pressure from the law.

Lord STANLEY: It was not the same law.

The Marquess of CLANRICARDE: But it was the extraordinary circumstances of the country that had rendered the change necessary. He believed that if the Government had proposed that they should at once proceed to legislate on the subject, they would delay instead of expedite its settlement; and he had no doubt but that a Committee would, in that case, have been called for, in order to inquire into many of the alterations which might be submitted to Parliament. He also felt persuaded that any amendment of the law which it might be desirable to adopt, would be more easily carried after the Committee had concluded its labours; and he was, therefore, glad to find that the Motion was to meet with no opposition.

Lord MONTEAGLE said, that he agreed entirely in the opinion expressed by the Lord President who had last addressed their Lordships, as to the necessity of appointing this Committee. He did not think that Parliament could proceed to legislate effectually without this inquiry; for unless they succeeded in carrying the convictions of the English people with them, he despaired of any effectual legislation upon the subject. In relation to the present state of public opinion, he was far from thinking that they would meet in the opinions of the people of England anything but a kindly feeling towards the people of Ireland; but, at the same time, he regretted to say, they had to struggle against an entire ignorance, on their parts, of the actual state of the facts, and of the law as it had produced that state. He knew that it was very generally said by the people of this country, "We pay our poor-rates; we have our poor-law; we support our poor; and should not the people of Ireland do the same?" This, however, assumed that the state of the two countries was alike, and that the poor-laws of both countries were also alike. Any person who supposed this to be the case, must be as misinformed of the state of the facts as of the state of the law in both countries. Caught by the mere similarity of words, they were led astray from the actual truth. He believed that, if the state of the law as to rating in Ireland were introduced into England, the English Poor Law could not exist one calendar month. He was not prepared to contend that the English law, exactly as it existed in this country, was necessarily applicable to Ireland; but he did contend that it was most illogical to infer, that because the same law might be applied to both countries, two wholly different laws must likewise. The Irish Poor Law and the English Poor Law were the same in name only. If the system of rating adopted in Ireland were introduced into England, the English Poor Law could not last a month. In England, the rates were paid by the occupier; in Ireland they were paid by the landlord when below 4*l.*; and in other causes were divisible between the landlord and tenant. When the rent and the valuation coincided, the rate was then equally divided; but if the guardians, exercising their power of altering the valuation from time to time, rated the land not at its real value, but at a lower, say a half valuation, the effect of that would be, to throw the whole burden of the rate upon the inheritor or proprietor. But even without a fraudulent reduction of the valuation, the same consequence followed with rates greatly and rapidly rising as at present, the principle being, to deduct the amount of rate from the actual *bonâ fide* value of the land; so that if the rate rose from 5*s*. to 10*s*., the whole burden of the rate was cast upon the landlord alone. In England, the law was so entirely different that no comparison could be instituted as to its operation in the two countries. In Ireland the rate would soon fall exclusively on the proprietors, who were few in number. They would be administered by the many, who would also share in their distribution. If he thought that the appointment of this Committee would lead to any prolonged examination, or that it would relieve the Government from any responsibility in bringing forward some proposition on the subject, he certainly should not have been favourable to its appointment. The first duty of the Committee would be, to ascertain the fact which had been assumed throughout the speech of his noble Friend (Lord Stanley), namely, the failure of the present system. This would not require much evidence. Was it possible for any sane man to affirm that it had answered the purpose for which it was passed? It had been said that the measure had failed because of the famine. He admitted that the famine had necessarily severely tried the principle of the measure; but the famine had in this case only placed additional impediments in the way of a law which must of necessity have found difficulties even under the most favourable circumstances; and, for that matter, we should remember that it was the famine which had alone procured the passing of the measure in its present form. He was far from saying that no poor-law was required for Ireland; he would not enter into any such indefensible crusade as to endeavour to obtain the repeal of the Irish Poor Law: but he demanded as an act of justice such amendments in the present measure as should adapt it to the wants and capabilities of his country. He would remind the House that it could not be said this Bill had failed in consequence of any want of local co-operation on the part of the Irish landlords. It should be remembered that the law had been entrusted to the irresponsible control of three vice-guardians, armed with despotic authority, without local bias, and indeed often unacquainted with the character of the parts of the country to which the law was to be applied by them, and having no connexion or interest in the country. He did not, however, mean to make any complaint on this particular head; for he was quite ready to admit that, under the circumstances of Connaught and parts of Munster, that despotism had been attended with beneficial results. But this, equally with all the other features of the measure, required careful investigation. He did not conceive that the failure of the plan could be attributed to any want of local aid in its development. He was disposed to attribute much of its failure to the circumstance that it raised too high in the minds of the people the expectations of the relief to be derived from the measure. There had spread over Ireland an impression that by the operation of this Act all persons who chose to seek relief, under whatever circumstances, were entitled to have it. In fact, the supporters of the measure had practically tended to generate those very theories of socialism and red republicanism, which very many of them held in such utter abhorrence. We condemn these principles in France. We have adopted them against all warning in Ireland. *La nation garantie le travail*, said Louis Blanc. But this did not mean mere unrecompensed work—it meant wages, and wages affording the necessaries of life. Therefore socialism and red republicanism contemplated the guaranteeing to every member of the nation food, clothing, house, fuel, whenever such member thought fit to apply for these things. This we condemn and ridicule as an impossibility and as a wicked absurdity. But he should be glad to know wherein the guarantee held out, or supposed to be held out, by the Irish Poor Law, differed from the socialist guarantee? The simple truth was, that, in this measure, Parliament had entered into obligations towards the population of Ireland which it had not the means of fulfilling. The promise was a cheat and an imposture. The effect of this law on the population, in a moral point of view, had been most pernicious. Colonel Clarke, one of the assistant inspectors, had, in his report, distinctly stated that throughout his district the clear impression was, that no man need work unless he chose, and that every man had full right to be maintained by the State—an impression fast creating a further impression wholly incompatible with the security of property. His words were as follows:—

> "The doctrine has been publicly preached that a man has no occasion to work unless it so pleases him, but has a right to support for himself and family in the workhouse."

Colonel Clarke adds—

> "All principle of right and decency appears to

have vanished since the outdoor relief commenced, and the assistant barrister declared from the bench that he had never witnessed such profligacy or wilful perjury as had been exhibited."

The noble Lord opposite urged with great force the principle of individualising responsibility; in that principle he (Lord Monteagle) quite concurred; and his view of the objects contemplated by the Boundary Commission was, that they deserved the most serious consideration as involving a practical explanation of this principle. Another point to which the attention of the Committee could not be too earnestly directed, was the injustice now so constantly practised upon landowners, of making a revaluation of their property for rating purposes immediately after large sums of money had been expended upon its improvement. Sound policy, quite equally with justice, required that every encouragement should be given to the men who, perhaps at a heavy sacrifice, applied their capital, their credit, and their energies, to the amelioration of the condition of their country. As it was, so far, being so encouraged, all they got in certain cases by their outlay was, to have their rating augmented in even a greater proportion than the profits arising from that outlay. In order to show the injurious operation of the present system, he needed only to inform their Lordships that a friend of his, possessed of an unencumbered estate, but surrounded by overpeopled and pauperised estates, had given constant employment to between three and five hundred labourers; that there was not a single claimant, still less a recipient of the poor-rate, upon his own demesne estate; and that he was employing his neighbour's poor. Yet he was at this moment paying 10*s*. or 11*s*. in the pound for poor-rates, in addition to the amount he was expending on labour; and he had already paid between five and six thousand pounds as rates, over and above what he had paid for labour. It was impossible that this could last. He begged, in the next place, to call their Lordships' attention to the question of emigration. Without emigration, their Lordships might depend on it, and emigration on a greater scale, the frightful problem of Irish distress could never be solved. But it was no less true that the emigration which was at present going on was not at all likely to benefit the country. The movement was chiefly amongst that class of the population which it was the most desirable to retain—the possessors of capital. In that class were included not only those persons who were described as taking away that money without meeting the just demands upon them; but also persons who took away considerable capital after the due performance of their engagements. He was passing through Dublin the other day, and visited one of the emigration offices in that city connected with Liverpool, and in that single office he found, on inspection of the books by the agent, that (independently of the sums taken out in coin, which were so considerable as to attract the notice of the statesmen of the United States) the amount taken out in bills on Boston and New York by emigrants was at the rate of 25,000*l*. annually. This, it should be remembered, was after the cost of passage and outfit, and represented the necessary remittances from one single office. But important consequences followed this emigration. The land which had been held by those emigrants was suddenly thrown upon the landlords' hands; and how were they to make it productive? Their resources were already destroyed by the poor-rate. The labour fund was in their case abortive. Even if it were not so, the case would be much the same. Suppose that the best managed estate in the best part of England—for example, the estate of his noble Friend (Earl Grey), in Northumberland, which, as he understood, was a perfect model of what an estate ought to be—were so circumstanced; suppose that all the farmers were to throw the whole of their farms on his noble Friend's hands, and that at a time and under conditions which rendered it impossible for him to get other tenants to occupy them, would it be possible for his noble Friend, from his own resources, to undertake the cultivation of the land in his own person, and at his own cost. It was wholly impossible, on the part of proprietors, to supply the farming capital necessary for the cultivation of deserted lands. Every day the quantity of unimproved and untilled land in Ireland was increasing, and with the diminution of the cultivated land the poor-rates would become larger, and the resources out of which rates could be levied would diminish. It was said by some persons, "Oh, sell the Irish lands, and let them pass into the hands of better men." This was much more readily said than done. To sell, you must find a purchaser as well as a vendor. This was rendered difficult by the existing law. When a Bill was introduced by his noble Friend on the woolsack, to facilitate the sale of encumbered estates, what had been the result? Though it had passed the House of Lords on the high authority of the Lord Chancellor, his learned Friend's bantling was subsequently changed at nurse, and came back to them another Bill. His noble and learned Friend was, however, kindly willing to accept the paternity, and to take charge of the child. But though it had been thought that the Lord Chancellor's Bill was a despotic anomaly, it was discovered in the Commons that it would not be effective enough to attain the great object of revolutionising the whole state of landed property in Ireland, and extirpating the present proprietors as a useless race, in the hope of substituting gentlemen of capital, intelligence, and power. The Bill was therefore remodelled with this intent. With what result? He asked, what sales had been effected under the Encumbered Estates Act? It was often complained in Parliament, when returns were called for, that delay was produced in consequence of the length and complication of the papers required; but he ventured to say, that, if a return were ordered to be made of the number of estates sold under this Act, no such objection could be made—no delay need take place. He predicted that the return could be furnished by the expenditure of a single sheet of paper, bearing as an inscription upon it the three emphatic letters "Nil." That was all they had obtained from the mighty efforts of the combined wisdom of both Houses of Parliament; and he understood that parties had been equally unsuccessful when trying to sell property without the intervention of the Encumbered Estates Bill. Those of their Lordships who expected to produce by changes of ownership any large and effective deliverance from the calamity which now threatened to overwhelm Ireland, would certainly be disappointed, unless some change were made in the present poor-law. The present state of affairs was certainly fearful. The great bulk of the gentry in the distressed parts of Ireland were actually crushed; day by day habitations which had once been the centres of kindliness and benevolence, the pride and ornament of the country, and which men had been accustomed to regard as proofs of an increasing civilisation, were closing up, or becoming auxiliary workhouses for the increasing pauperism. The time was coming when the bench of justice would be deserted, when there would be no magistrates to administer the law, and no gentry or proprietary to stand between their Lordships and the pauper population; and when the distressed parts of Ireland would, in fact, be converted into one general den of pauperism, governed only by paid officers, acting under the despotic control of the central power. And let not the possessors of property in the more favoured parts of Ireland, imagine that they could long escape. They might struggle against the evil for a time, but the plague-spot would become part of the permanent system, and would extend to all parts of Ireland. England, too, must suffer; for, if not immediately, yet eventually, but most certainly, was the Irish Poor Law an English question. Irish paupers would persevere in their endeavours to find subsistence in England. Their numbers must rapidly augment. All attempts to check this by sending the Irish back to their own country, would only accelerate their arrival, facilitate their journey, and increase their numbers. After earning all they could in England, they would remit what they had saved to their own country, by means of a bank or post-office order, then they would render themselves chargeable, in order to return at the public expense. In conclusion, he must declare that, while he should cordially vote for the appointment of the Committee, it would be by no means with the intention of shielding the Government from the responsibility of propounding such measures as were required by the public interest.

On question, resolved in the *affirmative*.

House adjourned to Monday next.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, February 9, 1849.

MINUTES.] NEW MEMBERS SWORN. For Portsmouth, Right Hon. Sir Francis Thornhill Baring, Bt.; for Kingston-upon-Hull, Matthew Talbot Baines, Esq.

PUBLIC BILLS.—2° Habeas Corpus Suspension (Ireland). *Reported.*—Inland Revenue.

A CONFERENCE. Ingrossing and Inrolment of Bills.

PETITIONS PRESENTED. By Mr. Ward, from Teachers of the Schools connected with the Unitarian Chapel in Sheffield, for Referring War Disputes to Arbitration.

THE NAVIGATION LAWS.

MR. G. R. ROBINSON asked the President of the Board of Trade if he intended to lay his resolution on the subject of the Navigation Laws upon the table of the House, before proposing that the House should go into Committee thereon?

MR. LABOUCHERE said, the hon. Member would probably recollect that some discussion took place upon this very subject last year, when he stated the reason why he thought it would be inexpedient that the resolution should be laid upon the table of the House before it went into Committee. The obvious consequence would be that a debate would ensue before the Speaker left the chair. Believing, then, that it would be more convenient for the debate to take place in Committee, he must decline, as he did last year, putting the House in possession of the resolution until he had made his explanation in a Committee of the whole House.

RECTORY OF BISHOP WEARMOUTH.

Mr. HORSMAN rose to put a question to the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell), of which he had already given notice, and he begged to say that he did so for the purpose only of eliciting information on the subject of the mode in which the patronage of the Lord Bishop of Durham had been exercised in a recent case. It had been generally understood that when the Rectory of Bishop Wearmouth, in the diocese of Durham, should become vacant, some new arrangement was to be effected in the distribution of the revenues of that wealthy rectory. He now begged to ask the noble Lord whether he was able to inform the House what that new arrangement was, more particularly whether any portion of the revenues was to be appropriated to other clergymen and chapelries of the district?

Lord J. RUSSELL said, that, on receiving notice of the hon. Member's (Mr. Horsman's) intention, he had written to the Lord Bishop of Durham on the subject, stating at the same time that it was quite optional whether he chose to give any information on the subject or not. The bishop, had, in reply, stated that he did not recognise any right of questioning him on the subject, unless there was some general inquiry instituted; but that he did not object to give such information as was requisite to him (Lord J. Russell). When the vacancy occurred in the rectory of Bishop Wearmouth, by the death of Dr. Wellesley, a correspondence took place, which was succeeded by a deputation from the ancient select vestry of Bishop Wearmouth, accompanied by the mayor of Sunderland, who waited on the bishop. The deputation stated to his lordship their wishes with respect to the new division and distribution of the revenues of the rectory of Bishop Wearmouth. Those revenues consisted of tithes, the rents and profits of glebe lands, surplice fees, rents of staiths and wayleaves, and rents of coals. The deputation proposed that the tithes, the glebe rents, and the surplice fees should go to the rector of Bishop Wearmouth, but that the rents of staiths and wayleaves, and of coals, should be vested in trustees, in order to constitute a fund out of which an increase should be made to the incomes of the four other incumbents of the parish of Bishop Wearmouth. The bishop took the proposal into his consideration, and having consulted with some eminent authorities on the subject, he made an arrangement which corresponded almost with the letter of the terms proposed by the deputation—namely, the tithes, glebe, and surplice fees, were henceforward to go to the rector of Bishop Wearmouth; and the other portions of the revenue, arising from staiths, wayleaves, and coal rents, were to be vested in trustees, to form a fund to be apportioned amongst the four incumbents of St. Thomas, Deptford, Ryhope, and Hylton. It appeared that the whole value of the rectory of Bishop Wearmouth was 3,828*l.*, out of which the late rector paid 1,605*l.*, leaving 2,223*l.* for himself. Under the new division about 1,200*l.* would form the rector's income, and the remainder would be divided between his curates and the four incumbents, which latter would have about 1,600*l.* divided amongst them. The correspondence had ended on the part of the deputation by their sending the following letter to the Lord Bishop, signed on their behalf by the chairman, Mr. John Scott:—

> "Bishop Wearmouth, Nov. 30.
>
> "My Lord—I had the pleasure of submitting your lordship's letter of the 27th instant to a meeting of the ancient select vestry, held this morning, when it was unanimously resolved, that, as the chairman of that meeting, I should convey to your lordship our warmest thanks for the kind manner in which your lordship has received the suggestions we ventured to make, and for the great anxiety and care your lordship has shown towards the spiritual welfare of this great and populous parish. The appointments and arrangements your lordship has made appear most excellent, and, under the blessing of Providence, we confidently trust will be productive of the greatest good to every class of the inhabitants.—I have the honour to be, &c. "John Scott."

Mr. HORSMAN asked whether the four incumbents were to have the 1,600*l.* divided amongst them at once?

Lord J. RUSSELL said, that from the 30th of May the staith and wayleave rents and coal rents were to be paid to trustees for their benefit.

SECEDING CLERGYMEN.

Mr. GRANGER beged to ask the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) whether the Government intended to bring any Bill forward this Session to relieve clergymen seceding from the Church of England from the penal consequences incurred by their preaching in other places of worship?

Lord J. RUSSELL said, it was not the intention of Her Majesty's Government to introduce any Bill on the subject. His hon. Friend the Member for Kilmarnock (Mr. Bouverie) had given notice of a Motion which would bring the subject under the consideration of the House.

IRISH POOR COMMITTEE.

Mr. HENRY wished to know if the number of the Committee on the Irish Poor Law was to be augmented, and whether the name of Mr. Bright was to be added?

Lord J. RUSSELL said, it was the intention of his right hon. Friend the Secretary for Ireland to propose an enlargement of the Committee, and he believed it was his intention to add the name of Mr. Bright.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS.

Mr. J. B. SMITH wished to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether any steps had been taken by the Government to carry out, wholly or in part, the resolution of the House of the 30th of May last, proposed by Dr. Bowring; and whether the gross receipt of revenue, averaging about 7,000,000*l.* per annum, which had hitherto been stopped in its progress to the Exchequer, would in future be paid into the Exchequer, and placed under the direct authority and control of Parliament.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER said, that steps had been taken by the Government to carry out in part the resolution proposed by Dr. Bowring on the 30th of May last. As to the latter part of the hon. Gentleman's question, it was difficult to give a general answer. He was not prepared to say that all the sums which were received would be paid into the Exchequer, and placed under the direct control of Parliament.

Mr. HUME said, that the real purport of the resolution of his hon. Friend (Dr. Bowring) was to bring the salaries, allowances, and other payments made out of the gross revenue, annually under the notice and sanction of the House.

HABEAS CORPUS SUSPENSION (IRELAND) BILL.

The Order of the Day for the Second Reading of the Habeas Corpus Suspension (Ireland) Bill was then read.

Mr. O'FLAHERTY said, that he had not heard one single argument advanced which could induce him to agree to the present oppressive measure. It was stated to be necessary for the purpose of putting down political agitation in Ireland. So far from there being any symptoms of agitation in Ireland at the present time, he believed the feeling of the people of that country amounted to an absolute disgust at agitation. But it was constitutional agitation that the Government wanted to suppress; and he warned the House, and English Members in particular, that they were arming Ministers with a power which would come in the end to be turned against themselves, and used to put down freedom of expression in Lancashire and Yorkshire. The present measure was to be accompanied by another for the relief of the distress which existed in some parts of Ireland. He would not oppose that vote. On the contrary, he warmly advocated the proposal to save the poor starving people from death by hunger. But he must express his conviction that votes for the relief of Irish distress were the result of the misgovernment of that country, and as long as the present system of governing her continued, so long would similar votes be required. He had looked for some large measures from the present Ministry for effecting a change in the administration of public affairs in Ireland, and for amending her institutions. He felt disappointed, and he must record his vote against the Bill.

Mr. SADLEIR said, he did not mean to deny the importance of maintaining the constitution of the country unimpaired; but he maintained that no case whatever had been made out by Her Majesty's Ministers to justify them in appealing to the House at this moment for a further suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland. He had felt it to be his duty in 1847 and 1848 to give his support to the proposition then brought forward by the Government, and he had done so under the conviction that tranquillity and the absence of political excitement were essential for the social amelioration and improvement of the country; and he believed that every man acquainted with the condition of certain parts of Ireland admitted at the time the necessity of some such measures as were then proposed. But his belief was, that on no occasion whatever had there been a measure like that now before the House brought forward on such slight grounds as at present. In the document chiefly relied upon by the right hon. Baronet (Sir W. Somerville), when introducing this Bill, he (Mr. Sadleir) could find no proof of the necessity of such a power being continued in the hands of the Executive Government. He felt bound, from his acquaintance with the rural population of some of the proclaimed districts in Ireland, to state his conviction that they were attached to the constitution of this country—that they were devoted to the person and Crown of Her Majesty—and that if there were discontent and dissatisfaction amongst them, that discontent and dissatisfaction arose solely from the policy and the conduct pursued by the existing Cabinet. The Lord Lieutenant stated, in his letter, that—

> "It is to secure for Ireland this continued repose which is so vitally essential to her prosperity, to protect the country from the renewal of an agitation for objects that cannot be attained, and which for many years has disturbed its tranquillity, scaring away capital, destroying confidence, and rendering impossible the steady application of industry, that I desire strongly to impress on Her Majesty's Government the importance of applying to Parliament for a renewal of those powers which the 11th and 12th Victoria, c. 35, placed at the disposal of the Executive Government in Ireland."

Now, he would beg to remind the House, that it was not a country where the constitution was suspended—it was not a country where the personal freedom of the subject was allowed to hang on the breath or dictation of an individual, that the enterprising and the speculative would choose as the field of their industry and enterprise. He had heard that if they desired to scare away capital, and to drive the peaceable and industrious portion of the population out of the country, the best course to adopt was to continue this miserable, this wretched make-shift policy which the present Cabinet pursued. It was not where an armed soldiery mixed in the social policy of the country that industry and enterprise were likely to flourish. As to the repeal of the Act of Union, it was not just, or discreet, or fair, to place the continuance of this measure on the ground of a necessity existing for the prevention of agitation for that or any other legitimate object. On the contrary, the right hon. Baronet (Sir W. Somerville) had distinctly declared that this Bill was not intended to prevent agitation for a repeal of the Union. It appeared from the letter of the Lord Lieutenant that only 120 persons had been arrested under the Bill of last Session; but the House was not informed what number of these persons were still in custody. If but six persons still remained imprisoned under these extraordinary powers, it would furnish a strong argument against the measure. He had had occasion during the period of greatest excitement in Ireland last year, to propose, at a meeting of the humbler classes, in one of the proclaimed districts, the health of Her Majesty, and he could assure the House that it was received with a degree of enthusiasm that would have done honour to any society in the empire. He then felt anxious to propose a similar compliment to the Nobleman at the head of the administration of affairs in Ireland; but he could not succeed, as he found it impossible to sever the personal conduct of the noble Lord (Earl of Clarendon) from that of the Ministers with whom he was associated. It would be well for the Government to remember, that the Irish people were remarkable among the nations of the world for the tenacity of their political recollections. They could not, therefore, now be expected to forget that the present Ministry, when in opposition, had put forward the grievances of Ireland in the strongest manner. The Government should remember that the Irish people were not a nation of barbarians—that they were not a set of unmitigated boors—that the light of education had been extended to them; and they were not, therefore, likely so soon to forget the time when the noble Lord at the head of the Government had carried his opposition to the coercion system so far as to spend the greater part of a night in protesting against the payment of 25,000 men who had been employed in enforcing the Queen's authority in Ireland, or when he had so strongly dwelt on the Church Establishment in Ireland as an intolerable grievance. When the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) had thus excited hopes, that it was to be admitted were extravagant, he ought at all events to have availed himself of those great exigencies which had occurred since his accession to office, presiding as he did over a House of Commons in which all parties were anxious, and united, and willing to give him a cordial and generous support in the introduction and discussion of any system of policy of a comprehensive character calculated to ameliorate the miseries and to redress the grievances of the people of Ireland. The noble Lord at the head of the Government took occasion during the last Session of Parliament to defend the policy of the Government in the dispensation of the millions of the public funds in Ireland; and he cast the blame of that lavish expenditure upon the gentry and the ratepayers of Ireland, alleging that they had within themselves the power of directing into more productive channels the expenditure of that immense fund. The noble Lord, however, omitted to inform the House that there was no discretion whatever as to the disposal of those funds with the people of Ireland, but that the whole responsibility and control rested with the Government. Could anything be more disheartening to the people of Ireland than the exhibition which three Members of the Government had made during the last week in that House? The right hon. Baronet the Secretary for Ireland, in the first instance, assured them that the question of the area of taxation in connexion with the poor-law was one of such importance and difficulty that it was impossible to legislate upon it, and that the matter should be referred to a Committee. In the same week, the right hon. Gentleman informed the House that that vital question was to form no portion of the investigation of the Committee. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had occasion to advert to the appalling destitution in certain districts in Ireland, but he had no remedy to propose. [The speech of the hon. Member was here interrupted by a Message from the House of Lords requesting a Conference. The hon. Member resumed.] He was about to refer, he said, to the arguments of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as illustrative of the undecided and the divided state of the Cabinet, which had created in Ireland so much distrust of the legislative capacity of this House. The noble Lord at the head of the Government, when called upon to state his opinion as to the principles and details of the Irish Poor Law, did not state to the House the opinion which he had formed, and contented himself with assuring the House that he had formed certain opinions which he would lay before the Committee. The right hon. Baronet the Home Secretary had intimated in the most direct manner that he was favourable to a diminution in the area of taxation, while the right hon. Baronet the Chancellor of the Exchequer assured the House last Session, that he was in favour of an increase in the area of taxation. He could not help saying, that this condition of the Minister forcibly recalled to his recollection a story of the late Chief Baron O'Grady, who being called upon to decide a complex and difficult legal question, on which his two colleagues, Baron M'Lellan and Baron Foster, had given opinions diametrically opposite, his lordship answered, in that brief and laconic manner which so remarkably characterised him—"I am compelled to agree with my learned brother M'Lellan, for the reasons assigned by my learned brother Foster." So he expected to hear the noble Lord state to the Committee, that he was compelled to agree with the right hon. the Home Secretary, for the reasons assigned by his Friend and relative the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It was this indication of all want of decision upon important questions, on which rested the development of the industrial resources of Ireland, that was the true cause of dissatisfaction and discontent in Ireland. Nothing had yet emanated from the present Administration but successive promises and successive professions. There was among that Administration either a want of disposition, or a want of legislative capacity, or a want of that political knowledge and acquaintance with the affairs of Ireland, which would enable them to grapple with the difficulties of the country. No steps had been taken to preserve the staple industry and staple manufacture of Ireland, no measure had been introduced for maintaining the selling and setting the value of land, and therefore the people were driven to despondency. And even if the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) were now to come forward and announce some comprehensive system for the advantage of Ireland, he, for one, would have no faith or confidence in such a declaration, though if those declarations were realised, no one would rejoice more than he should. He distrusted them because he saw among them no humble and unostentatious habits—no industry and application brought to bear upon Irish questions—none of those primary movements made, on which the construction, the preparation, and the introduction of remedial measures, which had nothing to do with political or party questions, ought to rest. They found that the right hon. Baronet the Secretary for Ireland was obliged to divide his time and his energies between his Parliamentary duties in the House, his official duties in the Irish Office, and his administrative duties as an Irish Poor Law Commissioner. He thought the first arrangement in the way of improvement was the retirement of the right hon. Baronet from one or other of these duties, as it was impossible that he could find time properly to discharge them both; and he had forgotten to say that if they intended to introduce measures of improvement, the sooner they made an arrangement by which one of the Irish law officers should be introduced to this House the better. If they failed in doing that, they would he condemned to the miserable repetition of the wretched bungling of last Session, when measures were introduced by Gentlemen who, however great their acquirements might be, were ignorant of the laws, the habits, or the circumstances of Ireland. He believed that the present proposition, taken in connexion with the other proposition to vote 50,000*l.* for Irish distress, was intended for the purpose of enabling the existing Administration to continue in office, and to resist the widespread spirit of disaffection and disappointment which was prevalent in every district in Ireland. It was idle to pretend that the measure was introduced to allay political excitement. The people of Ireland were not in a spirit which would dispose them to receive the poison that might be spread among them by political firebrands, but they were in a disposition to turn their attention to those questions on which the social regeneration of the country depended. They were anxious to consider and to examine any proposition which might be brought forward in that House to improve the relations between landlord and tenant, for the security and protection of industrious, skilful, and enterprising tenants. They were discontented, because of the physical wretchedness of the country—they were discontented, because no means were taken to enable those individuals to maintain themselves by their own industry, who were now forced to become mendicants in the workhouses—they were dissatisfied, because three millions of the people of Ireland were reduced to a condition of utter destitution—they were discontented because no measure had emanated from the Government calculated to relieve their distress, or to bring into operation that capital which he believed was to be found in all needful abundance in Ireland itself. He thought it would be well for the Government to consider whether a measure to allow the Bank of Ireland to invest its surplus capital, by way of mortgage, in the land of Ireland, would not be an agreeable substitute for a Coercion Bill. It would also be well for them to consider whether a Bill to provide for the better management of that mass of landed property which was now under the control of the Court of Chancery, would not be found a great improvement. He would ask, was it wise, was it just, was it statesmanlike to introduce a Bill last year, which would cast into the management of the Court of Chancery still more of Irish property? Yet that was the direct result of the Encumbered Estates Bill. You had not increased the facilities for the sale or transfer of landed property in Ireland, but you had rendered it necessary for every inheritor and creditor to place the property under the control and operation of the Court of Chancery. Had you not continually inveighed against the evil results which ensued from the introduction of landed property into Ireland? Could any one look at the property of which the Lord Chancellor of Ireland was at this moment the landlord—at the destitute condition of the people on these estates—without regretting that Government was not guided by sounder principles? And would it not be better for them to substitute for the present Bill one which would entitle and compel the trustees of Trinity College to a better management of their vast territorial possessions in Ireland? Hon. Members had heard much of the pernicious practice of middlemen in Ireland, and yet it was a fact that the collegiate estates were constantly demised, not to the tenant occupiers, but to a middleman, and it was perfectly indifferent to the managers whether he lived one mile or 1,000 miles from the estate. Two remarkable instances of this occurred only last year, where the lands fell out of lease, and the former lessees declined to renew them, but gave their opinion to the managers, that the tenant occupiers should be the immediate tenants. The tenants themselves were anxious for such an arrangement, and offered a rent amounting to the full value of the land; but the managers, in their wisdom, thought proper to reject the offer, and to demise the land in each instance to middlemen, who were absentees, and who gave rents under those offered by the occupying tenants. Would it not also be wise if the Government would turn their attention to the condition of the lands managed by the Ecclesiastical Commission? The pages of the blue books and official reports abounded with information of the destitute condition of individuals who were located on property held by the Ecclesiastical Commission. In one instance it was proved that sixty families on one estate held by that commission were in the receipt of outdoor relief; and there was incontestable evidence to show that if these sixty families were provided for, the destitution on the remaining property of the district would be merely nominal. They were willing to emigrate to any of Her Majesty's colonies; but the Ecclesiastical Commissioners refused to bear the expense, and the sixty families were left to weigh down the energy, the industry, and the self-reliance of their neighbours. The Government had ventured to lecture Irishmen on the importance of self-reliance. He fully agreed in the importance of the principle; but he told them that they had already done more to break down that spirit of self-reliance than the legislation of a Session could cure. The object of the Government should be to devise some direct and speedy means to induce the industrious, the skilful, and the solvent cultivators of the soil to continue in the country — to hold out to them some direct and intelligible inducement to show that it would be for their own interest and prosperity to continue in the land of their birth. It would be well if any measures could be adopted to induce capitalists to take courage, and to believe that it would be safe for them to invest their capital, and that it would not be destroyed by the amount of poor-rates and taxation. They ought to bear in mind that the actual population in Ireland could not, for a century to come, execute the requisite labour which was incidental to the improvement of the cultivable land alone. By requisite labour he meant the necessary drainage, the formation of good fencing, and the erection of suitable farm buildings. He felt certain that there was abundance of capital in Ireland itself to improve the country, and to employ the agricultural population. He was not ignorant of the important and appalling fact, that of the thirteen millions of rental in the country, no less than five millions must change hands. No legislation, no event, no harvest, could prevent the inevitable sale and conversion of land to that effect; and that fact ought to force upon the Government the necessity of directing their attention to all the laws that related to the devising the sale and the transfer of lands in Ireland. These were plain practical subjects for which it would be unnecessary to issue a commission. But he would ask them, was it wise to act as they did last year, when, at the fag end of the Session, they introduced a Bill which, he acknowledged, contained some important improvements—he meant the Bill for abolishing leases by way of covenants of perpetual renewal—a Bill which was first introduced by the right hon. Baronet the Secretary for Ireland in a shape and form which no man practically acquainted with Ireland could give his assent to; which the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) afterwards introduced in a much amended form, but which, at the slightest symptom of opposition, was again withdrawn. He would ask, was it becoming in the right hon. Secretary for Ireland to introduce a Bill which had paralysed the industry of the country, adopting a new principle of elective franchise, and then immediately withdrawing it again? Was that calculated to inspire confidence in the Government? Did it not give just reason to reproach the Government with having abandoned all their old principles, and with having adopted an inverted system? Something had been said about the necessity of preventing clamour in Ireland. He asked, was it not well that there should be clamour in Ireland, so long as grievances, such as no other nation on the face of the globe endured, were allowed to continue unredressed? Was it not natural that clamour should continue so long as the masses were suffering miseries which were unknown in any other civilised portion of the globe? Adopting the idea of Burke, he would say, it was better that the slumbers—that was to say, the apathy of the Treasury bench should be broken by the alarm of the fire-bell, than that they, their families, and their property, should perish in the flames. Thanking the House for the patience with which they had heard him, he begged to move that the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

Sir H. W. BARRON opposed the measure of the Government, because it would give *pabulum* to the dangerous and disaffected in Ireland. It was the most unwise course that, in his opinion, the Government could possibly have adopted in the present state and condition of the country. He regretted to be obliged to speak in such strong terms of disapprobation. But such was his fervent and decided opinion. At the present moment there was no tendency, nor did the Government allege there was, to political excitement in Ireland. This he knew, that many who had opposed him at the last Waterford election in favour of Mr. Meagher, the Young Ireland candidate, now deeply regretted the course they had taken, and were now quite disabused of the delusion then so prevalent. He thought it his duty to warn Her Majesty's Ministers, that in pressing on this measure they were adopting a course which was sure to prove destructive to the peace and well-being of Ireland. According to Government logic, it did not seem to matter whether a country was tranquil or seditious. When the country was, to a small extent, disaffected, the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act was demanded to tranquillise it; now, when all was peace, the same measure of coercion was asked for, lest disturbances should break out again. Such reasoning might do for Algiers, but surely it would not find acceptance in a British House of Commons. The only plausible argument advanced for this Bill was, that the country was not, although tranquil, generally so well affected as the Government could wish. He was surprised to hear such an argument put forward by the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell), who was the head of the liberal party. Would the noble Lord have attempted to use such an argument in the case of the English Chartists? Would England, would Englishmen, when Chartism had been put down, have supported the noble Lord if he had said, "The Chartists have been put down, all fear of disturbance is at an end; but as they are still discontented, I demand a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act?" What he (Sir H. W. Barron) wanted to know was, whether or no the Irish people were living under the British constitution. He could tell the House that until they were—until they had an equal share of British rights and privileges, there would never be peace or tranquillity in Ireland. They had expected something very different from the present measure on the meeting of Parliament. They looked for measures calculated to stimulate the industrial energies of the people, and develop the resources of the country. They expected to have heard some proposition for reclaiming the waste lands, or for giving some additional stimulus to the landed proprietors to till and improve their properties by draining, subsoiling, or other works that would give employment to the labouring population—these were the things he had looked for on the opening of the Session. A great deal was being constantly said about the laziness of the Celt; all he could say was, that in his neighbourhood the people were only too anxious to be employed, and when employed they gave full value for their wages. The landlords had also come in for their share of censure. In the *Times* of that very day, there was an article charging the landlords with having caused all the miseries of Ireland, by the minute subdivision of their properties. He could tell the *Times*, that for the last twenty years the landlords of Ireland had been using their utmost endeavours to diminish the number of small holdings. But they had many difficulties to contend with, of which he could give an instance which had happened within his own experience. He had a small property within seven miles of Waterford, which about thirty years ago was let on a long lease. On this property, which was only 150 acres, the tenant had squatted forty-two under tenants, each of whom had paid him 5*l.*, 10*l.*, or 15*l.* premium on entering upon their holdings. How was the head landlord to be held accountable for such a state of things as this? He was no more accountable for the misery of those forty-two cottiers than was the writer in the *Times* himself. It was very unfortunate that men, who knew nothing of what they were talking or writing about, should make such assertions. It was thus that prejudices were raised against the Irish landlands as a class and body, and thus it was that they were doomed to destruction—*Delenda est Carthago* was the cry—"Destroy the Irish landlords utterly." It was ignorance and malice combined, which induced those persons, who must give something to feed the vanity and bad passions of their readers to raise such an outcry. He warned the House and the Government against the course they were pursuing. They would find that, by stimulating industry and employment, they would create peace, content, and happiness throughout the country. Let them by remedial measures bring in a good Landlord and Tenant Bill, give the farmer an interest in his land, and they would soon see an improvement in the condition of the Irish people. The English manufacturers had an interest in promoting that welfare, for the Irish were their best customers. They took millions upon millions of the products of

Manchester, of Leeds, and of Birmingham; and as they became more prosperous, their consumption would be doubled or trebled. In his opinion, English and Irish interests were identical, and you could not injure one without sensibly impairing the other.

MR. SHARMAN CRAWFORD wished to state briefly his reasons for refusing his assent to the proposition of the Government. If the only consideration to be taken into account in the matter were the personal qualifications of the individual who was to administer the law, the character of the Earl of Clarendon would make him (Mr. S. Crawford) hesitate to refuse to entrust such powers to him. But it would be a bad principle to grant unconstitutional powers on account of the personal character of the administrator. The reasons, therefore, which were put forward by the Earl of Clarendon for demanding the continuance of those powers, should be examined by themselves and upon their own merits; and in his (Mr. S. Crawford's) opinion those reasons were totally insufficient. The first question was, that—

> "On the part of those engaged with the late treasonable movement, no indication whatever of sorrow or repentance for their misdeeds had been observed."

He (Mr. S. Crawford) submitted that that should be no element of consideration in the question. The particular opinions of one set of politicians should not be put forward as a consideration on which the acts of that House should be founded. The second reason put forward by Lord Clarendon was—

> "That there was no reason to believe that the recent orderly conduct of the people in the districts where disturbances prevailed, or were threatened, proceeded from any improved feeling as regarded either the law or the Executive Government."

Such a supposition was quite inadmissible as a reason in so serious a case. The third was, that the Executive Government had not the support of the people in suppressing the late insurrection; and the fourth, that the population in the proclaimed districts had not delivered up their arms when called upon. Now, there should not be too much stress laid upon the latter fact. It was a natural feeling that in disturbed times people should be in possession of arms for the protection of their houses, their families, and their persons. And these being all the reasons assigned by the Earl of Clarendon for demanding the great powers which he sought, he (Mr. Crawford) submitted to the House that they were not sufficient. But it was necessary not only to give reasons for putting Ireland out of the pale of the constitution; the objects to be gained by such a course should be stated also. And what were they? The object which the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) had chiefly in view was the repression of political agitation. Now, that political agitation which had gone on for many years in Ireland existed no longer; and he asked the House, was it possible for any one to believe that any man existed, or was likely to exist for many years to come, who was or would be capable of carrying on again such an agitation as that which had been carried on by a deceased hon. Gentleman? It was impossible. He wished to cast no reflection upon the opinions of the deceased; but he (Mr. Crawford) was always of opinion that that agitation was delusive in its character, and that it would not answer the purposes for which it was intended. But he thought it would be now impossible to renew that agitation again. There might be, indeed, an honest open agitation for the repeal of the Union. He did not know that there might not be large meetings held for the purpose of obtaining a repeal of the Union; but he denied that there could ever again be such agitation as that which was gone by. He had opposed the Treason and Felony Bill, because it was not accompanied by any remedial measures, and had expressed his conviction that until such measures were proposed and carried, there would never be tranquillity in Ireland. He should oppose the present measure on the same grounds, and because Government had taken no steps to redeem the pledges made in the course of last Session. He opposed it as an Irishman, because it deprived his countrymen of their rights; and as an English Member, because he believed that it might form a precedent for the future coercion of his constituents.

COLONEL THOMPSON said, if the Chartists had ever got the length of necessitating the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, few English Members would have hesitated to consent to a further suspension on the credit of the Government. But there were many English Members now who were anxious to show that, though fully disposed to support the Government in every necessary power, they were also jealous of every suspension of popular rights. More Members than himself were in straits with their constituencies on this point; for Irish Members would be much mistaken if they believed there was not a strong Irish feeling among the constituencies, and a strong disposition in English Members to unite in every way they deemed practicable in promoting the welfare of the less fortunate portion of the empire. He hoped Members with these feelings would have an opportunity of expressing them by voting for a reduction of the period of extension in Committee; and with the understanding that he should not be prevented from doing that, he should vote for the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. B. OSBORNE said, it had not been his intention at that stage of the Bill to offer a single observation upon it, but that after the speech of the hon. and gallant Officer who had just sat down, he felt that he could not refrain from expressing his opinion, particularly when he found an hon. Member, possessed of the pure intentions of the gallant Colonel, imposed upon by such a letter as that written by the Earl of Clarendon. Now, when the present measure was first brought before the House, he (Mr. Osborne) gave it a willing support, because he considered then that Ireland was placed in a very perilous position, that the insurrection was not a mock one, and that a single success upon the part of the rebels would have plunged the country in blood. But he must say that there was a different state of things in Ireland now. Without at all depreciating the efforts of Lord Clarendon, he thought there had been a most unnecessary mead of adulation paid that noble Lord, and he could not for the life of him see what his Lordship had done to warrant the general conspiracy of all parties to bow down before his shrine. The Lord Lieutenant had simply done what any other able general officer would do. He had had an army of 30,000 men, commanded by most able officers, besides the patronage of Dublin Castle at his disposal, and with that assistance, he had succeeded in putting down the factious proceedings in Tipperary. He was quite prepared to give credit to the Lord Lieutenant, or to the Government, had they proposed some comprehensive scheme for the future policy of Ireland, and not, what he would call, the policy of kicks and halfpence now proposed—the object of which was to take away the liberty of the subject. Had the overtures lately made by the noble Lord at the head of the Administration to a distinguished individual on the opposite benches (Sir J. Graham) been successful, he (Mr. Osborne) confessed that he should have felt more strong confidence in certain parts of the Government plans, for then he would have felt that, at least one statesman and a man of great administrative ability had joined the Ministry. It was well known that the right hon. Baronet (Sir J. Graham) had left the noble Lord's party on the Irish Church question—that he left them in the year 1834, because of their views on the Appropriation Clause; and yet now, in 1849, the Whig Government were making overtures in their necessity to the right hon. Gentleman, who had years before separated from them on a vital question. He (Mr. Osborne) knew that this Irish subject was a disagreeable one to speak about, because hon. Gentlemen were so intent on glorifying the Earl of Clarendon; but he felt and believed that the Lord Lieutenant's government in Ireland was not founded on public opinion, but on Her Majesty's Army. The Government were now about to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act. What position would they be in at the end of six months? Were they to go on perpetually suspending this Act, and calling for grants from the Consolidated Fund? because as yet those were the only two measures for Ireland which Her Majesty's Ministers had propounded. One night they came down to the House and asked for a grant of 50,000*l.*, and the next they came down and asked for a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. Did they call this government? What was the result of the Devon Commission? Why, that after a great expense had been incurred, and many blue books presented, that Commission did nothing more than saddle the Consolidated Fund with the payment of the Irish Constabulary. That Commission concluded its report in 1843, and from that day to this all that was done was to saddle the payment of the Irish Constabulary on the Consolidated Fund. The Government were now coming to the Consolidated Fund again, and when they had pulled that string sufficiently long, they then suspended the Habeas Corpus Act. He dissented from this plan, and also from the letter of the Lord Lieutenant, which he considered disgraceful. The gallant Colonel who had just addressed the House was for suspending the Act for three months; but he (Mr. Osborne) would not consent to its suspension for one day longer, because he did not think it necessary, and he was sure it was not founded upon the principles of justice, He wished to know what had become of all the measures which the noble Lord at the head of the Government had considered necessary some time since to cure the evils of Ireland? What had become of the Irish Church question, and all the other measures and plans which the noble Lord was to bring forward on coming into office? Why had he, as an honest man, turned out the Government of the right hon. Member for Tamworth, if he was not prepared with some grand scheme for Ireland? He (Mr. Osborne) contended that the party to which he belonged had been fraudulently imposed upon at the time they turned out the late Government, which he believed in his conscience was an honest Government, merely to put a select family circle in office. He knew that this was the feeling in Ireland, and that the noble Lord had utterly destroyed the remnant of the Whig party in that country, because no man would now come forward on the hustings and gain the votes of an Irish constituency by saying that he was attached to the Whigs. Let the noble Lord tell the House what was the policy he intended to pursue with regard to Ireland if this perpetual system was to go on of suspending the Habeas Corpus Act and granting money. He regretted that the Lord Lieutenant had thought it right to reflect on the men who were now paying the penalty of their crimes in a gaol, and to state that he saw no signs of contrition on the part of the men who had participated in the late disturbances. He had no sympathy with the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. J. O'Connell) in his agitation for the repeal of the Union; but Her Majesty's Ministers were throwing power into that hon. Member's hands, and giving an impetus to the repeal agitation, by proposing such a measure as the present; and he, for one, would cheerfully vote for the Amendment.

Mr. REYNOLDS observed, that last Session, on the second night on which the House sat, they had been called upon to pass a Coercion Bill for Ireland. Soon after, they had been called upon to pass another; and about the termination of the Session, they had been asked to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act. Upon these occasions he had felt it to be his duty to vote with the minorities; but notwithstanding this, he felt that there were then some grounds for calling for these coercive measures. It was then said, and truly, that an active and angry agitation was being carried on in Ireland. It was then said, and truly, that in many instances the law was violated, and he confessed that he had found some difficulty in recording his vote against any measure of coercion. But upon the present occasion he felt no difficulty at all. He had read the debates upon the introduction of the present measure, and he could find in them no argument to justify the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act until next September. Ireland was found profoundly tranquil. He feared that that was the tranquillity of poverty. It was almost the tranquillity of the grave. The physical, and almost the mental, energies of the population were so prostrate that the people were not at present in a fighting humour. The last fight ended with the row at Ballingary, which some persons had facetiously called the Waterloo of the revolution. Reference had been made to the Lord Lieutenant. Now he saw nothing improper in the Lord Lieutenant writing a letter to the Minister of the Crown, giving his opinion as to what course of policy ought to be pursued in Ireland. He thought it a proper thing in a Lord Lieutenant to give advice; but whether the House ought to adopt that advice was quite another question. For his own part he was not inclined, in this instance, to follow the counsels which had been given by the hon. Member for Middlesex (Mr. Osborne). It was said that the Lord Lieutenant had done nothing to deserve approbation. He (Mr. Reynolds) did not think so. He thought that he had done much to deserve approbation. He had refused to arm the Orange yeomanry against the Catholic population; he had preserved the peace of the country; and it was because he (Mr. Reynolds) was anxious to support his government, that he was sorry that the letter in question had been written—a letter which, if it should be acted upon, would be productive of deep and lasting injury to Lord Clarendon's administration. He understood that one paragraph of that letter had been misinterpreted. He understood that it was not intended to interfere with agitation carried on by peaceable and legitimate means for the repeal of the Union, but it was intended to interfere with agitation against any other of the grievances under which the people of Ireland laboured. If so, he had no hesitation in saying that the policy of Government would fail. The people of Ireland had other grievances to complain of, of a leading and cardinal nature, exclusive of the repeal question. Did it ever enter into the imagination of hon. Gentlemen that the people were dissatisfied and discontented under the temporal oppression of the Irish Church? Could seven millions of people professing the Catholic religion, be content that the Ministers of a Protestant Established Church should receive in round numbers upwards of a million annually? He spoke as an Irishman and a Roman Catholic, and he declared that he would not feel that he was fully emancipated so long as the Protestant Church was established in Ireland. But in wishing to get rid of that Church as an establishment, he did not wish to introduce another. He was opposed to established churches of all denominations, and he held that the people should pay their pastors as they paid their doctors, and that it was utterly hopeless to expect permanent tranquillity in Ireland while the Established Church existed. He believed also that many of the grievances in Ireland were traceable to the Irish landlords; and that if the latter performed their duty as the landlords of England performed theirs, it would be far easier to govern the country than it was at present. In conclusion, he had only to repeat that he would oppose the measure before the House, and to express his surprise that no hon. Gentleman on the other side of the House, who would vote for the Bill, had favoured the House with his reasons for doing so. He believed that most of the votes would be upon the one side, and all the argument upon the other.

MR. TRELAWNY intended to support the Bill, thinking that Government deserved great credit for the promptitude and energy with which they had acted, and for the success with which they laboured to preserve the public peace. As regarded the future prospects of Ireland, he could not see any hope for that country so long as the people indulged their progenitive tendencies without having means at hand for the support of a rapidly increasing population. He blamed the conduct of the Irish Members in opposing the Bill. They were too apt to delay and thwart all Irish measures which did not include a grant from the Treasury in behalf of their constituents.

VISCOUNT BERNARD was anxious to have an opportunity of thanking the Government, and especially the Earl of Clarendon, whose conduct had been beyond all praise, for the manly way in which they had come forward to suppress rebellion in Ireland. He denied the assertion that there had been no danger. He had been on the spot at the time, presiding over the deliberations of the grand jury of the largest and most important county of Ireland, at the time when they thought it necessary to memorialise the Lord Lieutenant to send war steamers to the coast. He was, therefore, a witness who could speak to the greatness and imminency of the danger. At that period the county of Cork had been proclaimed; but had the arms possessed by the people been given up? This was a deeply important question. There had been a large importation of arms into Ireland, and no one could tell now where those arms were. It was not such outbreaks as that of Ballingarry which they had to fear. It was cowardly and skulking traitors who possessed these arms, and who would use them, he feared, in pursuance of a system of secret conspiracy and assassination. He believed that the present Bill was necessary, not only to preserve the peace of the country, but to promote its future welfare; and agreeing, as he did, with the Lord Lieutenant, that agitation was the bane of Ireland, he would now cheerfully support the proposition of Government.

MR. E. B. ROCHE observed, that one of the most remarkable features of the present debate was the studied silence of the Members of Her Majesty's Government upon this question. He had heard but two reasons for the measure alleged during the evening. The one was that of the hon. Member for Tavistock (Mr. Trelawny), touching the alleged progenitive tendencies of the Irish, and the other was the reason of the noble Lord (Viscount Bernard), who had just spoken, and who wished the constitution to be suspended because the grand jury of Cork were in a great fright. He could not help thinking that the great body of English Members were about to pursue a very extraordinary course upon this Bill. He had often acted with these hon. Members, particularly with reference to the free-trade question, at the risk of his own seat; and he saw with great pain the course upon which they were now bent in reference to the suspension of the constitution in Ireland. It was quite clear that the Earl of Clarendon's letter meant that the constitution ought to be suspended, in order to put down agitation for the repeal of the Union. Now, all he wished to say upon this point was, that a very large party in Ireland thought that the repeal of the Union was a very desirable measure; and he begged to ask the free-trade Members how they could reconcile it with their principles and their practice, to come down and vote for the suspension of the constitution in Ireland, in order to prevent a large body of the Irish people agitating peaceably and constitutionally for the repeal of the Union? The result of the measure would be that they could not have in Ireland what they had in Manchester. He wished, therefore, to inquire of the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Bright), and the hon. Member for the West Riding (Mr. Cobden), whether they were prepared to support this measure —suspending the constitution in Ireland— in order that a large body of the Irish people might be prevented expressing their opinion with regard to the legislative union of the two countries? In Manchester there existed an organised association for financial reform. If this measure were passed, that which was lawful in Manchester would not be tolerated in Dublin. The hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Bright), and the hon. Member for the West Riding (Mr. Cobden), had come up to Parliament after attending a great meeting at Manchester; but when the Irish Members made an appeal to them, to support them in obtaining the same constitutional rights which England enjoyed, these hon. Gentlemen took up their hats and walked out of the House. If anything could make him regret his free-trade votes, it was the conduct of the free-trade Members on this occasion. The hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Colonel Thompson) might be taken as a fair representative of the Radical party in general. Now, all that he (Mr. Roche) could gather from his speech was, that he intended to support the Government. The hon. and gallant Gentleman told them that he had often been in great straits with his constituency upon Irish questions. Now, all that he (Mr. Roche) would say was this, that he sincerely hoped the vote of the hon. and gallant Colonel to-night would place him in a greater strait than ever. He trusted that some Member of Her Majesty's Government would answer the question put by the hon. and gallant Member for Middlesex, and state what policy they proposed to pursue towards Ireland after they had got a suspension of this Act for six months, and after they had, consequently, kept the people of that country under their feet, trampled upon their liberties, and degraded them in the eyes of Europe? Were they to expect another suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act after the expiration of that term? He thought it was the duty of the people of Ireland, who were in distress, and still more of the people of England, who were about to administer relief to that distress, to ascertain from Her Majesty's Government the manner in which they proposed to govern that country for the future. He should like to know whether, in case another Chartist outbreak in England should occur, and tranquillity should be restored, any Minister would call for a suspension of the liberties of the people? He denounced the present proceedings of Her Majesty's Government as an insult to the Irish people. The Government might disclaim such an intention; but he gave them little credit for it. What Ireland wanted was good and statesmanlike laws; and the peace of the country required preserving, not by force and violence, but by a line of policy which should rally round the Government the good opinions of the people, and which should be based on justice and a spirit of fair dealing. Depend upon it, that so long as a system of coercion was maintained in Ireland, she would be a blot upon this country, and that she would in time drag England down to her own level of misery and degradation.

Sir W. SOMERVILLE said, that he should not trespass upon their attention with more than a very few remarks. His hon. Friend (Mr. Roche), who had just sat down, had paid himself a very bad compliment, which he (Sir W. Somerville) certainly should not have ventured to have uttered. His hon. Friend, in addressing himself to this measure—a measure of great importance, involving the interests, not only of Ireland, but of the empire—had endeavoured to establish what he (Sir W. Somerville) might be permitted to call a *quid pro quo* system. The hon. Gentleman said to those on his (Sir W. Somerville's) side of the House, who had taken into consideration the events which had occurred in Ireland during the last few months, and who no doubt had arrived with pain at the conviction that it was their duty to support the measure of Her Majesty's Government—he said to those hon. Gentlemen—"How can you think of doing such a thing as that? I voted for your free-trade measure, and I now expect you will come forward and assist me in resisting the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act."

That was a line of argument which he should not presume to address to the hon. Gentleman, for he had that opinion of him that he was persuaded that when the hon. Member voted in favour of the principle of free trade, he thought he was doing what was right, and what he was bound to do; and in like manner he was prepared to believe that the same spirit animated those Gentlemen who now felt it their painful duty to vote in favour of the present measure. [Mr. B. OSBORNE: They will not vote at all.] Who're "they?" He did not know who "they" were. [Mr. B. OSBORNE: The Manchester School.] He did not refer to the "Manchester School," but to the two hundred and odd Members of the House who had voted with Her Majesty's Government on a recent occasion, because they had thought it to be their duty to do so, as they had equally thought it their duty to vote for free-trade measures. The hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Sadleir), who was not then in the House, had addressed to him (Sir W. Somerville) a number of remarks personally, to which he should have offered some reply had he been present; but as that hon. Gentleman was not in the House, he should not follow his example by going generally into the question of Ireland, and making reference to the question of landlord and tenant, the franchise, and other topics to which the hon. Gentleman had alluded. But he should beg to address a few remarks upon the proposition immediately engaging the attention of the House, namely, the proposal to suspend, for a limited time, the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland. The hon. Member for Dublin (Mr. Reynolds), in the remarks he had addressed to the House, had laid a stress upon certain expressions in the letter of the Earl of Clarendon; and he argued that those expressions had led him to believe that, should the Lord Lieutenant be entrusted with the powers asked for, he would use them for the purpose of putting a stop to any agitation for a repeal of the Union. Now, did any man suppose that, in the present state of public opinion, any Lord Lieutenant—any individual entrusted with the Executive power in Ireland, even if he had the inclination, which the present holder of that office certainly had not—would presume to use those powers to stop an agitation for so peaceful and legitimate an object. Certainly not. What was intended to be conveyed by the expression which his Excellency had used, was, that if any agitation should be carried on in a treasonable manner, and in a way inciting to insurrection, such powers should be trusted to the Executive in Ireland. The expression did not therefore apply to such a system of agitation as that adopted by the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. J. O'Connell), because that agitation had been carried on for a number of years without interference on the part of the Executive Government, but it did apply to agitation carried on for treasonable purposes. Having said thus much, he confessed that, in addressing to the House any remarks in favour of the measure before them, he found himself in a different position to that in which he should have been had he addressed the House on the subject in the course of the last Session. A Motion to continue an Act of this description—an Act which had been found necessary only six months ago—was quite a different proposition, and rested on altogether different grounds to those on which the original proposition had been based, and did not require the production of that absolute proof for the measure which it absolutely required on its first introduction. The vote of to-night, he admitted, was, to a certain extent, a vote of confidence in Her Majesty's Government, and in the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, judging from the best information at his command, and conceiving that there was a lull, as far as any insurrectionary movement was concerned, at the present moment in Ireland, had come forward and had stated on his own responsibility to Her Majesty's Government—and on that statement Her Majesty's Government had proceeded—that he did not think it was safe at the present moment to deprive the Executive Government of the powers with which they had been entrusted during the last Session. It was easy to talk about this measure being an insult to the people of Ireland. Hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House seemed to think they had a monopoly of love for Irish freedom and Irish interests. But he (Sir. W. Somerville), too, felt that love towards his country, and he thought he had shown it all his life through. He not believe there was any party of men in Ireland who would look upon it as an insult to their country. For his own part, he believed it to be not only an act of necessity, but still more an act of humanity. Suffering, as the Irish people were at the present moment from an unheard-of amount of destitution, it was right that they should be defended against those who would prey upon their wants and destitution, for ulterior purposes of their own. Whatever the hon. Member for Middlesex (Mr. B. Osborne) might say to the contrary, he (Sir W. Somerville) believed that no man more completely enjoyed the confidence of all parties than the Earl of Clarendon. It had been felt that if the outbreak in Ireland could not have been put down without bloodshed, the precautions of the Lord Lieutenant would have been successful in checking it, and that he would act successfully against any future attempts at insurrection, or at disturbing the peace of the country. He (Sir W. Somerville) would not trouble the House with any further remarks. Every man who loved the liberties of his country must feel pain at being obliged to vote for a measure of this description; but he believed that such a vote was at this moment necessary, and was called for under the present circumstances of Ireland; and, for his own part, he should not shrink from any responsibility which might attach to a vote at which he had arrived in accordance with his conscientious conviction.

Lord CLAUDE HAMILTON agreed with the right hon. Gentleman (Sir W. Somerville) who had last spoken, that no person could feel satisfaction in any vote which he might be called to give on this question. As the representative of a large Irish constituency, he (Lord C. Hamilton) must say that he thought it but just that such an Act as that which they were now discussing—an Act which went to deprive so large a portion of their fellow-subjects of their liberties, on the score, as it was said, of humanity—should not be allowed to pass without the Government, which had brought it forward, coming and showing how it happened that so large a portion of Her Majesty's dominions had been brought into such a state of social disorganisation as to require the imposition of such a measure. He (Lord C. Hamilton) must ask the House to remember what party it had been in that House which had uniformly advocated the measures which had mainly contributed to the present state of things. The right hon. Baronet (Sir W. Somerville) had stated that this measure was to be regarded somewhat as a vote of confidence in Her Majesty's Government and the Earl of Clarendon. He would vote for it irrespective of all party considerations, for he should be ashamed of himself if he did not come forward to give expression to his admiration of the Earl of Clarendon, to whose unceasing mental and physical exertions it was owing that Government were enabled to state the insurrection in Ireland had been suppressed. He rejoiced, then, that the vote would be taken as a vote of confidence in that noble Lord. But he regarded the proposition of Her Majesty's Government very much in the light of an indictment against eight millions of the Irish people—a right was about to be withheld from them, which, properly, they should enjoy so long as they lived under the British constitution; and, considering the magnitude of the issue at stake, he thought that Her Majesty's Ministers should have given a more distinct and accurate account of the causes which had led to the present state of things. He held in his hand the communication from the Earl of Clarendon to the right hon. Baronet the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and which was put forward as the foundation for the continuance of this measure. He found in that letter a reference made to past Parliamentary history, in which he (Lord C. Hamilton) had taken a humble part; he found a reference to the difficulties of getting in the arms by proclamation, to a system of agitation which had long prevailed, and to the difficulties which must attend any attempts to wean the people from their past courses. Those statements led him to reflect upon the reasons which should induce him to give his vote on the present occasion. He could not forget that on Irish questions he had frequently found himself in opposition to the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) and the right hon. Baronet (Sir G. Grey). On the question of the Arms Bill, he had found himself night after night voting for adjournments. He could well remember how the Opposition spoke against what they then called governing by force, and lauded a policy which was based upon public opinion; nor could he forget the prolonged cheering with which the right hon. Gentleman, the late Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Macaulay) was greeted, when in rounded periods he charged the then Prime Minister of this country with governing the people by means of armed men and entrenched camps. He well remembered also the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) moving for a return of the number of troops then in Ireland, and declaiming against the attempt of the Government, to which he was then opposed, for their attempt by force to overawe the wishes of the people. He (Lord C. Hamilton) would ask how Ministers would like it, were he to move for a return of the troops, artillery, pensioners, and police in Ireland during the month of August last—were he to compare the number of troops employed under a Minister who had come into office by the rejection of the mild measures proposed by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth, with the number employed when the noble Lord at the head of the Government made a distinct attack upon the late Administration, that they governed by force and not by opinion? With respect to the present measure, he (Lord C. Hamilton) felt that it was not right to punish a people until it had been shown who had led them into error—until it had been shown who had drilled them in that system of agitation for which the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act was now asked as a remedy. In the space of two short years Her Majesty's Ministers had come down to the House to ask for measures which totally threw into the shade the milder measures of the Government which preceded them—measures which had then been denounced with all that eloquence about popular rights which seemed to animate hon. and right hon. Gentlemen when they happened to sit on his side of the House. He did not know whether it was any particular current of air, or peculiarity in the atmosphere of the House or not, but it always happened that speeches about popular rights, made for the purpose of catching votes, always proceeded from his side of the House. [*Laughter.*] Of course he meant the speeches of hon. Members who now sat on the Ministerial side. Could the Government wonder that we should have to deplore the existence of the present state of things in Ireland, when they reflected upon the system of demoralisation which had been pursued in that country for years past? He thought that the Government were responsible for much of the misery which now afflicted Ireland, and he trusted that they would express some little contrition for having in past years abetted a system of agitation which was now deplored by all parties in the State. The hon. Member for Armagh (Colonel Verner) had been deprived of the commission of the peace for doing that for which the hon. Member for Limerick had been praised, and had patronage put in his power. [Mr. J. O'Connell: No, no!] The noble Lord and his Colleagues ought to look back with remorse on their former conduct, and acknowledge that they had been instrumental in leading the poor unfortunate Irish into the agitation which the Earl of Clarendon now denounced. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Ripon (Sir J. Graham) said the other day, of the vote for the relief of Irish distress, that he hoped it would be "the last of the series." He (Lord C. Hamilton) hoped that the Bill now before the House would, in like manner, be the last of the series; that Ireland would cease to be driven, like a shuttlecock, from conciliation at one time to coercion at another; and that its interests would be regarded rather than the expediency of securing sixty or seventy votes for the purposes of a party. The first great vote which was taken after he entered the House was for the appropriation of the revenues of the Irish Church. It put the party in power which now held the Government; they retained office for six years, but never thought more of the Appropriation Clause. It was a stepping-stone to office. The noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) had again succeeded in driving the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth (Sir R. Peel) from office, and again upon an Irish question; but sixteen months had not passed away when Ministers found it necessary to introduce measures of a more stringent character than those on which they had defeated their predecessors. He hoped this would be the last time he should have to give a vote in favour of a Bill which was so exceptionable and liable to abuse.

Mr. J. O'CONNELL said, he had to beg pardon of the noble Lord (Lord C. Hamilton) who last addressed the House, for having interrupted him in the course of his speech. The noble Lord had stated an inaccuracy with reference to a deceased Gentleman, whose character was very important to him (Mr. J. O'Connell); he alluded to the late Mr. D. O'Connell, who had never induced nor countenanced the people's taking up arms, as the noble Lord had represented. [Lord C. Hamilton: I did not mean to convey any impression of that kind.] He was perfectly satisfied with the noble Lord's explanation, and he had only interrupted him to correct what he (Mr. J. O'Connell) had understood him to assert, but which he had now disclaimed. The speech delivered by one hon. Gentleman that night (Mr. Trelawny), he (Mr. J. O'Connell) would scarcely condescend to allude to—it was couched in the language of a bully of the stews, and he would pass it by with sovereign contempt. To come to the speech of the right hon. Baronet the Secretary for Ireland (Sir W. Somerville). That speech, much pleasure as it must give him (Mr. J. O'Connell) and his friends, was not sufficient to remove their objections to this Bill, because it was a very grave matter to suspend the constitution of the country in any part whatever of Her Majesty's dominions; and leaving out of the question the agitation which the right hon. Baronet had distinctly and expressly excepted and excluded from the operation of this Act, the right hon. Baronet had entirely failed to make out any case for its necessity at all. He (Mr. John O'Connell) held in his hand long extracts which went to prove the perfectly legal and constitutional character of the agitation against which he had understood, until the right hon. Baronet had spoken, this Bill to be directed; but as the right hon. Baronet had specially, and in terms, excluded that particular agitation from the operation of this measure, it was, of course, perfectly unnecessary now for him (Mr. J. O'Connell) to read these extracts in detail to the House. He (Mr. J. O'Connell) had had great pleasure in noting down the right hon. Baronet's words. He (Sir W. Somerville) had declared that they (the repeal Members) were under a total mistake as regarded the meaning of the Lord Lieutenant's letter, and also, of course, as regarded the commentary which the right hon. Baronet the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir George Grey) had made to the House respecting the statements contained in his Excellency's letter; and, therefore, those remarks which he (Mr. J. O'Connell) would have thought it his duty to continue that night upon that letter, and those comments, he did not feel it necessary now to pursue, inasmuch as he had just been told that this Bill had no application to the peaceful and constitutional agitation with which he (Mr. J. O'Connell) was connected. The right hon. Baronet's (Sir W. Somerville's) words were—"Of course the Lord Lieutenant will not presume to meddle with any peaceful, legal, and constitutional agitation;" and did him (Mr. J. O'Connell) the honour of referring to him, as a humble member of the repeal body, in order to mark more distinctly the application of his exceptional illustration, because he (Sir W. Somerville) knew that he (Mr. J. O'Connell) was, though but a powerless instrument, yet still an individual strongly identified with the repeal agitation—one who was connected with every move and intention of that body—one of the committee of the Association, who frequently took part in its proceedings, and one of those who were now preparing the way to renew its peculiar career of usefulness by peaceful, legal, and constitutional agitation. The right hon. Baronet had referred to him that night, and saved the character of the Ministry to which he (Sir W. Somerville) belonged. He had so far weakened the charge of consistency against them, inasmuch as that he had told the House that the Government did not intend to carry the outrage upon the liberties of the country as such a Bill as this inflicted, to the extreme lengths of proscribing the expression of public opinion, or to the most unconstitutional and tyrannous length of preventing a discussion of the propriety of repealing an Act of Parliament. He had asserted that if this Bill were to pass into a law, the Lord Lieutenant would not presume to interfere with any legal and constitutional agitation, such as that in which he (Mr. J. O'Connell) was engaged. He had said also that the species of agitation which this Bill was directed against, was agitation of a treasonable kind, for treasonable objects, and conducted in a treasonable manner. Now, he (Mr. J. O'Connell) did not know if in any excitement that had occurred in this House on any previous night, he (Mr. J. O'Connell) and his Friends (the repeal Members) had been regarded as being mixed with any of the disturbances that had broken out in Ireland last year, and with regard to which the right hon. Baronet had distinctly denied that night that they (the repeal Members) were at all in any way implicated; but if any one attributed to him (Mr. J. O'Connell) any conduct of a treasonable character, he would reply to him by the use of the shortest and most direct word in the English language. But even admitting, for a moment, that the slightest imputation of treasonable practices could fairly be applied to their (the repeal Members') agitation, then who, he would ask, would be to blame for it? Who would be the guilty parties? Why, not only the Ministry here (pointing to the Misisterial benches), who tolerated that agitation, but the ex-Ministry on the other side of this House, who never attempted to put it down either. And why not? Because they could not—because those who conducted that agitation had kept within the constitution, and could, therefore, defy any interference from the Government. He (Mr. J. O'Connell) had intended to give a determined and vexatious opposition to this measure to the utmost of his power, because he considered such a course perfectly justifiable where an act of tyranny was attempted to be perpetrated; but now that the right hon. Baronet (Sir W. Somerville) had disavowed any intention to direct the measure against the repeal agitation with which he (Mr. J. O'Connell) was connected, he would not pursue a course altogether so hostile as, under other circumstances, he would have felt compelled to adopt. He had placed on the books a notice of Motion for a Committee of the whole House upon the necessity for this measure; and he wished the Committee to receive an instruction; for he did not believe the new Orders interfered with the case of an instruction. His Motion on the books was—

> "That it be an instruction to the Committee to introduce such provisions into the Bill as shall guard and save intact the right of the subject to hold meetings, to petition for the enactment, repeal, or alteration of Acts of Parliament, or for redress of grievances, or other constitutional object, without other or further restriction of that right than existed under the operation of the Common and Statute Law of the Land, previous to the passing of the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act of last July."

This right of the subject, which it was his object to conserve unimpaired, was a right without which this House itself would have no existence; and surely the right to appeal or petition against any grievance, and especially against those worst of all grievances, grievances perpetuated by Act of Parliament, ought not to be taken away upon such weak and miserable grounds as those alleged in the present instance. [The hon. Member then briefly glanced at the various documents which he had intended to quote to the House, with the view of proving that all the movements and proceedings of the Repeal Association, from its original foundation up to the present time, had been strictly peaceful and constitutional, and always determinedly hostile to anything approaching to violent or unlawful measures of agitation. Among these documents was the report of the committee of the Association, dated July, 1846, respecting the secession of the Young Ireland party from Conciliation Hall; also an address to the people, issued on the 8th of March last, denouncing everything tending in the remotest degree to evince disrespect for the law, or lead to a breach of public order. Another address was likewise published by the Association, cautioning the people against the wild doctrines then abroad, and against the mad, rash, and criminal attempts to imitate the disastrous movements then taking place in many countries on the Continent, and holding out to them legal and constitutional agitation as the only sure and safe course to pursue for the achievement of their liberties.] He said, he would also have read another document, in which the Association protested against joining the Irish League, even although it had been formed with the laudable view of endeavouring to effect, if possible, a reconciliation between the Young Irelanders and their former associates, and to induce the former party to abandon physical-force principles, and combine with those with whom they had formerly co-operated in a cause of agitation strictly and exclusively moral, peaceful, and constitutional. It was totally unnecessary, as he had before said, for him to go into these details now, because he had no longer to combat an attack upon the conduct of the Repeal Association, since the right hon. Baronet the Secretary for Ireland had declared that that Association belonged to the category of legal and constitutional movements, with which the Lord Lieutenant would not presume to interfere. Dismissing from his mind all the bitterness which he might have evinced in the warmth of debate on the previous evening, he would earnestly appeal to the Government not to throw away their reputation as constitutional Ministers and statesmen by urging this Bill any longer, when they had not made out a case even for the necessity of such a measure to suppress any agitations not—like that of the Repeal Association—admitted to be excepted from the operation of this Bill. Above all, he begged of them not to suffer any ambiguity to exist regarding the right of public discussion. He (Mr. J. O'Connell), so far as he was individually concerned, was perfectly content to let the matter rest with the personal explanation made in that House by a Minister of such high honour and integrity as he was satisfied the right hon. Baronet (Sir W. Somerville) was, to the effect that such legal and constitutional agitations as the Repeal Association, with which he (Mr. J. O'Connell) was connected, would remain perfectly untouched by these powers proposed to be continued in the hands of the Lord Lieutenant. At the same time, for the sake of the interests of the public and the country in general, he (Mr. J. O'Connell) must ask to have the necessary words inserted in the Act, restricting the exercise of the Lord Lieutenant's powers under that Bill, in accordance with the explanation given that night by the right hon. Baronet; because the sacred right of the subject in question was of far too vital importance to be left on any future occasion—should it be called in question out of that House—to be jeopardised by depending upon the mere oral explanations of a Minister, made in connexion with the measure when it was under debate. He (Mr. J. O'Connell) would now turn to English Members of that House of liberal politics. He could not but contrast the readiness and alacrity with which they seemed, in contradiction of all their distinctive principles, disposed, in mere compliment to one man (the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland), to pass a Bill voting away the constitutional rights and privileges of their fellow-subjects—he could not, he said, help noticing the marked contrast between their hurry and haste to do this, and their determined repugnance to voting a paltry grant of 50,000*l.* for the relief of the poor unfortunate starving people of the west of Ireland, and regarding which grant more than one distinguished Member of that House had declared, that to refuse it to these miserable and perishing wretches would be equivalent to passing a sentence of death upon them. Then hon. Gentlemen had declared, too, that it was not the amount of the grant to which they objected —they must, forsooth, withhold it upon principle. One of these hon. Gentlemen had said, the grant was altogether an unphilosophical and unstatesmanlike expedient. But where was the principle—where anything philosophical or statesmanlike, in the support these friends of popular rights and popular liberties were about to give to this unconstitutional and tyrannical measure, to continue the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act? Some of them, too, afraid of having openly to falsify and betray all their former principles and professions by their votes upon this Bill, absented themselves from the House, in order that they might preserve their reputation for consistency in the eyes of their constituency. This was most ungenerous conduct towards Ireland, and it would take a long time to forget such treatment. It was a cowardly proceeding; but, however, it all tended more strongly than ever to impress upon the Irish people the lesson that they must not look to England for help, but must rely solely upon their own independent exertions, by peaceful agitation, to redress their own wrongs and ameliorate their own condition. The most obnoxious part of this measure, he admitted, had been removed, after the explanation of the right hon. Baronet; still, as it was, it would inflict a flagrant outrage upon the constitution; and no case had been made out to prove its necessity. Ireland was admitted on all hands to be now tranquil; and the unfortunate leaders of the late violent proceedings in that country were now either in prison, and under the power of the law, or were miserable refugees in a foreign land; and were persons now more entitled to their pity than their enmity. He (Mr. J. O'Connell) must, therefore, still oppose the measure before the House, and he believed that England was as much interested in its rejection as Ireland herself was; because, if the House adopted it, they might strike a deadly blow at the constitution, and lay down a most fatal and pernicious precedent. Under the present peaceful state of affairs in Ireland, ought they not at least to postpone the application for such a measure; and he was sure, if a recurrence of ominous circumstances at all calculated to justify such a measure took place again in Ireland, that the Government would find the House perfectly ready to arm them with the needful powers of repression.

Mr. HUME said, if he was anxious to address the House after the speech of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Roche), he was still more so after that of the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. J. O'Connell), who had indulged in an attack on the free-trade Members on his (Mr. Hume's) side of the House, accusing them with cowardice and everything discreditable; because, as he (Mr. J. O'Connell) alleged, they had deserted their principles. But the hon. Gentleman seemed entirely to forget the charges to which his own conduct that very night laid him open to—the very charges which he had been so liberally dealing out against others. Where was his own consistency in saying what he had just said (for really this was what his speech after all amounted to)—" I thank the right hon. Baronet the Secretary for Ireland (Sir W. Somerville), for leaving our Repeal Association alone—provided you do not interfere with my agitation, I shall be perfectly satisfied?" [Mr. J. O'CONNELL: No, no!] Where was the hon. Gentleman's regard for the general liberties of his country, if such a paltry sop as this was to be enough for him? So long as he and his coadjutors were let alone themselves, and escaped the lash, they did not appear to care who else came in for it. For his own part, he (Mr. Hume) objected to measures of this kind, though he had voted for a similar Bill last Session; but if the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. O'Connell) had attended to the speech of the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Sadleir), he would have learned the reasons which had influenced him (Mr. Hume), as they had that hon. Member, to support that measure; it was because the country was in a state of disorder, and that no remedial measures could be introduced until it was restored to a state of tranquillity; and he believed, as he had said before, that the Lord Lieutenant had exercised the extraordinary powers with which he had been intrusted with great discretion and judgment. And now that the country had been reduced to a state of tranquillity and order; and after the former declarations of the present Ministry, about the necessity for large remedial measures for the permanent good of Ireland, he (Mr. Hume) could not think the Government would hold their seats without intending, after they had had these extraordinary powers continued in their hands for a few months longer, to address themselves energetically to the task of boldly grappling with the social and political evils of Ireland, and carrying out large and comprehensive plans for laying the foundation of its future well-being and prosperity. It was upon this understanding, and upon this understanding alone, that he (Mr. Hume), who would yield to no man in his respect for the liberties of his fellow-subjects, had been reconciled to vote for the continuance of the suspension of the constitution on the present occasion. These he (Mr. Hume) believed also influenced his free-trade friends in their votes upon this question. He did not believe that any of them shrunk from candidly expressing their opinions. They were not a whit behind the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. J. O'Connell) in their attachment for the liberties of the people: and they all regarded the Government as pledged to apply its best attention to bringing forward measures to avert the lamentable state of things now going on in Ireland, and which must be expected to grow still worse and worse every day, so long as they went on suspending the constitution in this manner, and shrank from undertaking any other kind of legislation for Ireland but measures of coercion and force. He (Mr. Hume) would like to ask the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. J. O'Connell), and those other Irish Members who did little else but complain and find fault in that House—he would like to ask them, seeing they must be supposed to have more experience of their own country, and its social evils and sufferings than anybody else—what they would have the Legislature do to improve the social condition of the Irish people? Let them boldly and fairly propound what measures they wished for. He (Mr. Hume) and his friends were anxious that Ireland should be brought within the pale of the constitution, and receive the benefit of the same laws and liberties, and the same protection to life and property, as any other part of the empire. He thought it necessary, then, for him now to state he would give the measure his support, under the impression and in the confident belief that Her Majesty's Ministers were prepared to bring before the House measures of a comprehensive class. The noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) intimated to the House his conviction that the measure was necessary for the peace of Ireland. England demanded that peace should be restored to that country; and he well knew that peace must first be restored, and prosperity, together with the full enjoyment of political rights, would follow. It was in that hope that he accepted the present Bill; it was in that view that he interpreted the present position of the Ministers with regard to Ireland, whom he begged to remind of their wish, oft repeated, to do justice to that country; he said he voted for that measure as the means of creating an opportunity for the Government bringing in those great and comprehensive measures which were necessary for Ireland. If, however, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Limerick (Mr. J. O'Connell), and those who were with him in the Repeal Association, were again, in spite of the Government, to commence their old course, he asked him when they might expect to see the end of disturbances in Ireland? He thought that men who wished to promote the improvement of Ireland, ought first to wish her peace. Peace was necessary to her prosperity; on that ground, and on that ground only, he would vote for that measure. He had already asked the hon. Gentleman (Mr. J. O'Connell) to define the measures he would propose. Let him point out what he would do at this moment if he were in the position of Her Majesty's Ministers? That instant, repeal would be the cry. Would he embody it in a measure? and if he did, what would be the consequences? [Mr. J. O'Connell: Try it.] Try it? It had been already long tried; these trials had been the occasion of the evils which were now deplored; they had too long made trial of these delusions. For such a reason as that, and on the grounds he had now stated, he would now give his support to so unconstitutional a measure.

Mr. J. O'CONNELL explained, that while he had expressed satisfaction with the course taken by the Ministers, that satisfaction only went so far. For he had likewise said that the Bill now before the House was outrageous, fatal, and dangerous, as applied to freemen.

Mr. GRATTAN said, the hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume), in his speech in favour of the Bill before the House, had animadverted on certain inconsistencies which he professed to have seen in the conduct of his hon. Friend (Mr. J. O'Connell). But he (Mr. Grattan) was of opinion that the hon. Gentleman, in the course of his speech, had cleared his conduct just as little as did that of the right hon. Baronet near him (Sir W. Somerville). Now, among the reasons urged by the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) for voting in favour of this measure, he had set forward the character of the present Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. The Earl of Clarendon was said to be a man of ability, of great industry, great personal exertion, and great caution; and in all that he (Mr. Grattan) perfectly agreed. But then that could not be offered as a reason for justifying or proving the necessity of the measure. The Earl of Clarendon, it ought to be recollected, was an executive magistrate; they were legislators—he acted as the case required; they advised as the case demanded, and they were bound, as legislators, to advise in accordance with the principles of the constitution; but the Earl of Clarendon asked them to do away with the constitution itself. There were two classes of principles that guided legislation, and induced men to submit to government, The one was derived from property, the other from liberty. Property was vanishing in Ireland, and they were now called on to vote away her constitution. The hon. Member for Tavistock (Mr. Trelawny) had taunted Ireland and Irish Members with mendicancy and menaces. He wondered, after what had occurred in their own country, that Englishmen could throw out such imputations upon the Irish. He (Mr. Grattan) asked, had menaces been used by Irish Members, or where had the opportunity been offered them? The fact was, that instead of using menaces they had been duped. The words of Flood about "the generous credulity of Irish Members" might be repeated again in the House with perfect truth—they had been deceived by the Minister with words—they had been led into a compact which went far to sacrifice the interests of their country, and in return for this they were repaid with the most renegade conduct on the part of Gentlemen who walked out of the House, and left others to support the liberties of their country. What had Ministers done for Ireland? All their measures had failed—their Crown and Government Security Bill had failed—the Felony Bill had failed—and other Bills had all failed. What did they look for from their prosecutions—what from their indictments, which had been so numerous? They also had failed. Conviction had followed conviction, packed jury after packed jury; men were detained in gaol for months; and five indictments were drawn up against a single individual still in confinement; but yet they were not satisfied, and another Bill suspending the liberties of Irishmen was before the House. It suited some hon. Gentlemen, and especially the Member for Tavistock (Mr. Trelawny), to speak of "menaces," but it might not suit them to say openly that their object was to suppress the expression of opinion in Ireland. It suited them better to misrepresent that country. And what country was so liable to be so misrepresented for the independent expression of opinion? In the year 1779, when Irishmen wished to have what was now so popular, even with the Government, under the name of free trade, the Secretary immediately charged it as the opinion of faction. In 1782 they had a liberal Lord Lieutenant; but the Secretary—that adder who poured his poison into the Lord Lieutenant's ear—represented Irishmen as factious, and deserving to be impeached; and if that young Member (Mr. Trelawny), had studied the country and its history, he would have known that their chief leaders would have been indicted, but that 100,000 volunteers were at their back to support them in their patriotic efforts; yet it was not till the volunteers came forth, and their artillery had been brought to bear, that the virtue of Ireland rose to defend the independence and liberties of the country. Tell him of "mendicancy" and "menaces!" He would rather that they would take back their money, than listen to such taunts. There would be less of the mendicancy with which they were reproached, if the landlords of Ireland lived on the estates from which they derived their fortunes. Let the Earl of Portsmouth, Viscount Palmerston, the Marquess of Lansdowne, the Marquess of Anglesea, Egmont, Hertford, and a host of others, go back and reside in the country; then Ministers would have to deal with men who were acquainted with the state of the country. England was a commercial nation, and her people were, commercial men, and in a commercial spirit they dealt with it—money was their object, and to get money their endeavour, whether it came from the wilds of California or from the wilds of Connemara, no matter, so that it was money they got. They took money from Ireland; but now, when money was to be voted for that country, all were up in arms. The present cry for peace to Ireland was the old story that worked so miraculously in 1829; then it was, "Don't disturb the Church—don't attempt to coerce the Government." That policy was pursued by one of the ablest men in the kingdom, one of the greatest generals in modern times. In 1828, appeared the celebrated letter of the Duke of Wellington, addressed to Dr. Curtis, the Roman Catholic Archbishop, and his words to that prelate were, "Let this question rest for some time." He recommended — repose! — the repose of the sepulchre; but the Divine Spirit that lay within rolled back the stone from the entrance and appeared in triumphant and everlasting glory. He had not heard a single argument advanced in favour of the Government bringing forward this measure. The noble Lord (Lord John Russell) had failed to show that there was any necessity for it. What extent of power would satisfy the Government? Had they not everything they asked for — the law, the military, and the police—30,000 soldiers and 10,000 police—were they not all on their side? But suppose the Bill were to pass, it was only to be in force for six months; what, then, were they to do at the end of that time, when the Bill expired? They had proposed nothing—not a single measure to be carried in the meantime for the benefit of the country, which, at the end of six months, was to be thrown loose from this new control, and they who lived in the country with their families and their tenants were to be exposed to the presumed danger. The only measure spoken of was the old Bill alluded to by the hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume), respecting the franchise. So they were now coming to register the population when the population was gone: just as they came to alter the municipal corporations, when these corporations had sunk in corruption. There was no statesmanship in that. He held a document in his hand, giving the statistics of the population of a place in the south of Ireland, containing, at one time, 30,000 inhabitants. This document exhibited the number of births which had occurred in that place annually since the year 1843. For three months of the year 1843, the number of births were 332; for 1844, 300; 1845, 314; 1846, 285; 1847, 227; 1848, 33. He had never contemplated such a case as that where the births from 332 had decreased to 33. The Government, if they would be influenced by no other motive, ought to consider how much they were concerned in this state of the population for the supply of the Army and Navy. There were 42,000 in the Army who were Irishmen, and 20,000 in Her Majesty's Navy; what would Government do when the best of the people of Ireland had left the country? The great farmers and the wealthy tenants were going; and the lower classes would speedily follow them into another country. Could any one believe they would remain in a country stript of its nobility, its gentry, its manufactures, its wealth, and its liberty — in truth, they were not discussing the Habeas Corpus but whether there would be any *corpus* there at all. He said he looked upon all this as a retribution on the British Government, for the conduct which had long been pursued towards his country. Before he sat down he would read two letters which he had received, applying for his aid in behalf of persons who were suffering deeply under the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. He read a letter from Mrs. Meyler, who complained that her husband was at present confined in gaol; that on the 1st day of July last he had been taken while dining with his family by seven or eight detectives; that he was conveyed immediately, without the opportunity of bidding his family adieu, to Newgate; and after lying in the gaol at Belfast for some time, that he was removed to Kilmainham gaol, where he was locked up for sixteen hours a day, in a cold damp cell, without light or fire. The letter added, he wished for a trial, and that up to the present time he did not know any reason for his being arrested. It might be supposed that the person so treated was of the lower class; but he was of a family moving, before the calamity overtook them, in a very respectable circle—the father of five children—money to the amount of 100,000*l.* passed through his hands—he was realising a fortune of 800*l.* a year—he was a Member of the Royal Society, Dublin, and of the Chamber of Commerce. He therefore begged that Ministers would take these cases into their consideration, for the facts disclosed appealed to their humanity—not to say justice. He finally called upon the Ministers to bring in measures such as were demanded by the momentous nature of the present crisis. The Bill proposed was to prevent insurrection. But at this very time a revolution was actually in progress in the country; a revolution such as had not existed since 1688; it was a revolution of property, a revolution of people, a revolution which, if it progressed, would soon leave the country waste, without wealth and without liberty. The hon. Member concluded by expressing his determination to offer his utmost opposition to the further progress of the measure.

Mr. DISRAELI said: Sir, it was my intention to have given a silent vote in favour of the measure of Her Majesty's Government. When this measure was introduced to our notice last Session, I felt it a duty to express the reasons why I supported it, and I did so without reserve. But after the speech of the Chief Secretary (Sir W. Somerville), I feel that I might lie under misapprehension of the motives which induce me to support the Government, if I remained silent on this occasion. Sir, the reason why I support the measure of the Government is, that I think it is demanded by the exigency of the case. The circumstances since it was proposed to our consideration may have in some degree varied; there may have been some features of an alarming character then very evident, which no longer are visible; but I believe the general aspect of affairs is not so changed, that I for one can incur the responsibility of refusing to support the Government on the present occasion in a similar proposition. But when I am told by the Chief Secretary that the Government require our support for their measure, not on account of the exigency of the case, but on account of our confidence in Her Majesty's Government, I feel it my duty not to pass such an application without some comment. It is rather too much for Her Majesty's Government to claim the support of this House, on the principle of confidence in themselves. In my opinion they have obtained sufficient support here, without being too curious as to the cause. I certainly am not inclined to go out of my way to express any want of confidence in the Administration which exists; but when the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) and the right hon. Gentleman (Sir W. Somerville) challenge a declaration of confidence in their policy, I may be allowed, I hope, without offence, to express my protest. Certainly I cannot think that with regard to Irish policy the conduct of the Whig party during the time I have had any experience of public life, will afford an emblazoned page in the history of Whiggism. Sir, I have not forgotten the circumstances under which the Administration of 1835 was subverted; I have not forgotten, and I should think there are few persons in this country who have forgotten, the celebrated "Appropriation Clause." I have not forgotten the means by which the Whig party then acceded to power, the tenure by which they held that power, and the unfulfilled ends for which they continued in power, when they were no longer in a position to realise their public compact. I have not forgotten the events subsequent to that memorable political transaction, till they terminated in the renewed expulsion from office of the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth. The noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) may tell me, that I and my friends joined in the vote which expelled the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth from power on that occasion. We did so, but we did it with a frank expression of the opinions which we entertained. We looked upon that Government as a pernicious Government; we disapproved of their policy; we seized the first occasion on which we could hurl them from office; but was that the position of noble Lords and right hon. Gentlemen opposite? Were they impugners of his policy? Were they critics of the courses he pursued? On the contrary, they had been found in every division in favour of his policy; they were the ready adherents of the right hon. Gentleman; and when they did seize the occasion to turn him out of office, they did it in opposition to a policy which they themselves are now obliged to pursue in an aggravated spirit. Well, then, Sir, I think I am justified in saying that I am supporting this measure, not on account of my confidence in the general Irish policy of the Whig party. But then I am told by the Chief Secretary (Sir W. Somerville) that I am to support this measure on account of the confidence of the House in the Lord Lieutenant. I have heard to-night the noble person who occupies the office of Viceroy of Ireland spoken of in terms not only of respect but admiration; indeed, one Gentleman who addressed you, Sir, even compared his influence to that of Providence. But I cannot forget that only very recently many of those Gentlemen who are to-night so loud in praise of this distinguished functionary, voted in favour of a Motion for doing away with the office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; and upon that occasion I can well recollect that feeble was the opposition and scanty the arguments which were offered against the Motion then brought under our notice. I hope we shall at least draw one inference from what is occurring—that the Lord-Lieutenancy is an office not of such light importance as it has been the fashion of economists and liberal critics to impress upon this House. But if I have little confidence, as far as their Irish policy is concerned, in Her Majesty's Government—if I must hesitate, after all I have heard in this House, before I believe that a Lord Lieutenant—even if that Lord Lieutenant be an Earl of Clarendon—is an efficient security for the good government of Ireland, I have less confidence, I confess, in another party who to-night have expressed their loyalty, and in whose future conduct we have been assured we are to find the best security for the good government and prosperity of that country; I mean those Gentlemen whom I believe I may call, without offence, the professional patriots of Ireland. These Gentlemen have favoured us to-night with a minute and curious exposition of their political feelings. They have instructed us how they are prepared with a sort of tariff—a sliding scale—of opposition to extend to public affairs; how they are furnished, according to circumstances, with a vexatious opposition on the one hand, on the other a determined opposition; a vexatious opposition being, I suppose, an opposition that dies upon the floor of the House; a determined opposition, that milder, though firm, opposition which is not unwilling, under peculiar circumstances, to devote its services to its country. But when we have these unsatisfactory elements before us, how alarming is the speech of the Chief Secretary! He comes forward to-night in the midst of a violent opposition to appease the waters; and he succeeds. Because he tells his opponents "this vote does not apply to you; there is a difference," says the Chief Secretary, "between treason and agitation; this Bill is only directed against treason, not agitation; don't be uneasy." I believe there is a difference between agitation and treason: about the same difference as there is between adultery and rape. This is a Bill, says the Chief Secretary, against treasonable practices carried on in a treasonable manner—not against treasonable practices that are not carried on in a treasonable manner; whereupon an hon. Member (Mr. J. O'Connell) tells the House that his speech will only be half as long as he intended, because he finds he has only to defend treason, and not to vindicate agitation. This is the position in which the question has been put most unexpectedly to me, by the chief Member of the Government who has addressed us. A measure is brought forward—in my mind a wise, a politic, a necessary measure; it is opposed by those whose policy, in my opinion, has, whether intentionally or not, occasioned the evils which it is devised to control. No sooner is it opposed by them, than a Member of Her Majesty's Government rises and assures them that in no circumstances will they be affected by the measure. It was not an unnecessary assurance; they are not only honourable, but learned Gentlemen; they have read and studied the Bill, and they find a law proposed which was to put down their pernicious system of agitation. The instant they discover that—the instant they appeal to the Government, and oppose the Government on that plea—the Government immediately rises and tells them they are to be saved harmless. Sir, the measure, which I doubt not, will pass; the measure will put down, I hope, not only treason, but agitation. It will secure, I trust, calm and tranquillity in Ireland. The Bill will, I trust, give the Members of Her Majesty's Government an opportunity to bring forward those comprehensive measures which England feels to be necessary for Ireland, and for which we mainly support this Bill, that the Government of the country may have an opportunity to bring forward those measures. This is not the only measure under our consideration which will make every Gentleman in this House feel that the Government can no longer delay bringing forward those measures. The very question we expected to be discussed to-night, but which has not been brought forward, has already produced an intimation from one of the most distinguished Members of the House to Her Majesty's Ministers that these comprehensive measures can no longer be delayed. In dealing with this Bill, I vote for a measure that by securing tranquillity in Ireland will give the Government an opportunity of there introducing those remedial measures that are necessary. For my own part, I have confidence in the future tranquillity and prosperity of Ireland, not only from those measures, but because I have confidence in that portion of the population of Ireland, whom still, it seems, we must not allude to except in a whisper. But I believe the time has now arrived when their religion will no longer be considered a reproach, nor their loyalty a crime.

Lord J. RUSSELL: Sir, the House appears to have so far made up their mind as to the necessity and policy of this measure, that I thought it would not be necessary for me to address the House to-night; and I should not do so, were there not certain misconstructions of the measure to be set right, in consequence of the speech of the right hon. Baronet the Secretary for Ireland, and certain allusions to my past conduct, that I cannot pass over, though I regret I am obliged to take up a portion of the time of the House in doing so. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Disraeli) who has just sat down said, I think excusably enough, after the speech of the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. J. O'Connell), that parties would be allowed to carry on a system of agitation, free from any interference from this measure. The hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Roche) says that this Bill will have the effect of putting an end to all discussion in Ireland, no matter upon what subject, however constitutional—that petitions could not be proposed, nor grievances complained of, if this measure were to pass. But the House will recollect that my right hon. Friend the Secretary for Ireland distinctly stated that the object of the Bill is not to put a stop to discussions upon constitutional subjects, and that it would not have that effect. He (Sir W. Somerville) stated, that it would aim at agitation connected with treasonable practices, and discussions which tended to the promotion of any such practices; but that any discussions, calmly and constitutionally conducted, upon any question with the view of asking Parliament for redress, are not intended to be prohibited by the Bill, and cannot be interfered with under the terms of the measure. The hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. J. O'Connell) adroitly indeed, but not with a very fair inference, says, that the Association with which he is connected in Ireland meets solely for the purposes of legitimate agitation, and he complains that their fair discussion of political matters will be put a stop to by this Bill. Now, Sir, I must say very plainly, that the Bill itself contemplates treasonable designs and treasonable practices; but the power of imprisoning persons suspected of treasonable designs and treasonable practices is to be placed in the hands of the Lord Lieutenant. Sir, I have had much conversation with the Lord Lieutenant since the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, in reference to agitation in Ireland; and my noble Friend told me that agitation must be carefully watched. That species of agitation which tends to the getting up of a petition to Parliament upon constitutional grounds, the Lord Lieutenant has not, and ought not, to have the power to prevent; but that the meetings of an association, which is likely to fall very rapidly into a club or a conspiracy, and tend, therefore, immediately to treasonable practices, ought to be carefully watched, is not only the opinion of my noble Friend at the head of the Irish Government, but the opinion also of myself. And should any treasonable practices be carried on, it will be the bounden duty of my noble Friend to secure the peace of the country by the application of the powers of this Act.

Mr. J. O'CONNELL: Does the noble Lord mean to say that I have been guilty of treasonable practices?

Lord J. RUSSELL: The hon. Member has asked me a question, and I will answer him. My opinion is, Sir, that the hon. Gentleman would wish to carry on what he may think a wholesome, but which I think is a pernicious system of agitation, without any intention of committing treason or of being guilty of treasonable practices; but seeing what I have seen with regard to the proceedings of the Association of which the hon. Member was the leader last year, and, although the leader, left in a very small minority upon a great question, inasmuch as the majority were of opinion that moral force was altogether a delusion —[Mr. J. O'Connell: No, no!]—and that they concurred with some confederation over the way, of which physical force was the doctrine intended to be practised—seeing, and knowing, and remembering all this, I must say that I could have no confidence in any association which the hon. Gentleman might set up in Dublin. I, however, acquit the hon. and learned Member for Limerick personally, I acquit him fully and sincerely, of any treasonable design or any treasonable practices; but I am not prepared to say that those whom he might assemble together in the form of an association would be equally innocent of treasonable designs or practices; and I do believe that any political association with which he may be connected in Ireland is not unlikely to be liable to penalties under this Bill. Now, Sir, I have at least answered the hon. Gentleman fairly, and he may take what course he likes with respect to this Bill. He may, if he pleases, make the second part of the speech he intended to deliver to-night; but I will not deny, nor will I conceal from the hon. Member or the House, what will be the effect of this measure. Now, Sir, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Disraeli) who spoke last, following the noble Lord the Member for Tyrone (Lord Claude Hamilton) has referred to some matters over which he glided rapidly and skilfully, but with regard to which the noble Lord entered into greater detail, but with remarkable inaccuracy. The noble Lord (Lord C. Hamilton) said, that in 1835 I brought forward a resolution with respect to the Appropriation Clause, solely and entirely with the view of displacing from power the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth (Sir R. Peel); and that having carried that resolution I allowed the question to slumber, and never mentioned it again. The history of the Appropriation Clause is well known, and can easily be referred to in the annals of Parliament. It is a history which cannot tell of a successful issue, but nevertheless it cannot sully the object I had in view. Concurring with Earl Grey, I was a party to a Coercion Act in 1833—a measure of very severe repression, and I did think, in the following year, that it was the duty of His Majesty's Government to prepare itself with a measure by which part of the revenues of the Irish Protestant Church, not needed, in my opinion, for the members of that Church, should be made useful to other religious communities, such as Roman Catholics and Presbyterians. Sir, I urged that opinion upon the Cabinet, and the discussion of the question ended in retirement from office of four of the most distinguished Members of the Cabinet. The Cabinet then proceeded according to the course which I thought the wisest, and a Commission was appointed to inquire into the state of religious communions in Ireland, and a measure was ultimately proposed with the view of carrying out my original proposition. It pleased His Majesty William IV. then to dismiss from His Councils Earl Grey, and Viscount Melbourne came into office; and upon the occasion of the death of my lamented Friend, Earl Spencer, His Majesty declared that there was no further occasion for Lord Melbourne's services. The right hon. Member for Tamworth again came into power. Sir, I never relinquished my views with respect to the Irish Protestant Church, and I continued to press them upon the attention of my Colleagues. I was not obliged to forego them because the right hon. Member for Tamworth was in office; neither was I compelled to sink them because they were not carried out by the Government with which I was connected. I, therefore, Sir, as an independent Member of this House, brought forward the resolution, which is contained in Parliamentary history, with respect to the property of the Irish Church. When the right hon. Member for Tamworth (Sir Robert Peel) retired from office, a measure was prepared upon the subject according to the views of the then Government. It was submitted to the House of Commons once, twice, thrice, or perhaps, four times, and was carried, in every instance, by small majorities; but upon each occasion it was rejected by the other House of Parliament. So untrue is it, Sir, that I invented this scheme for ousting the right hon. Member for Tamworth; and it is equally far from the truth that I allowed the question to slumber after I had taken it in hand. The measure was rejected in the House of Lords, whilst English opinion was in its favour. and the opinions of the Irish amounted to indifference. [*Cries of* " No, no!" *and* " Hear!"] That, Sir, was my view of the case, and entertaining that opinion, I certainly proceeded to take measures for the settlement of the tithe question, without insisting on the appropriation principle. I may have mistaken public opinion—I may have made an error in considering the subject; but this I must claim for myself, that such a measure would have been of great utility in Ireland, could it have been carried; and it was, Sir, with that view I proposed it. There were, Sir, other measures in contemplation for the benefit of Ireland at the same time. One of these was with respect to the establishment of municipal corporations, and putting them upon a proper basis. That measure year after year was rejected by the House of Lords; but it ultimately passed into a law. The noble Lord the Member for Tyrone (Lord C. Hamilton) said, that Lord Melbourne's Government committed all their power and patronage in Ireland to the hands of the late Mr. O'Connell—that they were absolutely subservient to his will. Sir, I totally deny that charge. Lord Melbourne advised his Sovereign to place the Marquess of Normanby at the head of the Irish Government. My belief is that the conduct of the noble Marquess in that capacity was conciliatory and wise, and that he procured a period of tranquillity to Ireland that was adapted to the wants of the period, and also that he retained the authority vested in him, notwithstanding the great and powerful influence upon public opinion of Mr. O'Connell; and great as was his influence over public opinion, the authority of the Marquess of Normanby as representative of the King, was paramount in that part of the united kingdom. Sir, I therefore feel no remorse with respect to my share of the Government of 1835. The noble Lord the Member for Tyrone also spoke of the opposition to the Bill of 1846 for the protection of life and property in Ireland. Sir, upon that occasion I declared that I would not oppose the Bill on the ground of want of confidence in Her Majesty's Government, but thought it was a Bill ill adapted to the circumstances of that time —that shutting up persons at night who had committed no offence was a vexatious proceeding; and, therefore, holding these opinions, I voted against the proposition made by the noble Lord (Lord Eliot), the then Secretary for Ireland. Sir, it is a popular topic to say, that we turned out a Government upon a question of coercion, and that we are now resorting to coercion ourselves. It is quite true what has been stated upon that point, but there is a difference in the circumstances of the cases. My belief is, that the various measures we have brought forward have been adapted to the condition of Ireland; but it is entirely a matter of opinion that the Bill of 1846 would have at that time proved a useful measure. I can only say that, whether in or out of office, I shall propose or oppose those measures according to the dictates of my own judgment, which I think best suited, or otherwise, to the circumstances of the country. Sir, I am sorry to detain the House with matters which I felt necessary to allude to in my own defence; but the noble Lord (Lord C. Hamilton) has thought fit to make such personal and bitter attacks upon me, I could not well have avoided repelling them. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Disraeli), in alluding to this measure, and his support to it, adverted to other measures of a comprehensive nature which he thought it would be the duty of the Government to bring forward. Certainly the Government intends, if possible, to pass a series of comprehensive measures for the benefit of Ireland, of some of which notice has been given. Others will hereafter be proposed. But, Sir, I think that I should not be acting fairly to the House if I did not say that any measure which we do bring forward will, in my opinion, prove totally inoperative without those two qualities which I mentioned in 1846, namely, a spirit of self-reliance, and a spirit of co-operation. Other Irish measures would now have been under consideration had the debate on this question not lasted so long. It is intended to propose a Bill for extending the right of voting in Ireland—a right which I believe ought to be extended. But I must at the same time confess that, in my opinion, the same use is not made of those constitutional privileges in Ireland as in England. The Acts which passed after the Revolution of 1688 were sufficient for a century afterwards to enable the people of this country to exert themselves in extending their trade, manufactures, and agriculture—were sufficient to enable them to convert barren soils into fertile fields, and to raise flourishing towns throughout the country. But observe, those laws by virtue of which they did these things, were not laws for creating industry, commerce, and comforts. They were laws which enabled men to exert their faculties for the purpose of obtaining distinction; and, in proposing such measures for Ireland, we shall do the utmost which, in our opinion, it is proper for us to do. Measures for local improvement will also be brought forward; but with respect to these, there is much difficulty to contend with. There is, for example, a danger of sending the industry in a wrong direction, and thereby creating a feeling that we had done that which we ought not to have done. However, Sir, Parliament will duly deliberate upon all questions of that nature. My opinion is, that the ultimate result of the privileges which were twenty years ago granted to all sectarians and parties, will enable the people of Ireland to take that place in society which they ought to hold in right of their great natural talents, their great power of physical exertion, and their industrial habits. I am not sanguine enough to think that any great changes in the social and moral condition of the mass of the Irish people will occur, or that all treasonable correspondence will be suppressed in the course of the next six months, for which term we ask for the continuance of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. All I can say is, that it is the earnest desire of Her Majesty's Government to improve the condition of Ireland. It will be for Parliament to judge whether the measures they propose are calculated to effect that object; and if they do not succeed, it will be for others to bring forward measures which will prove more advantageous.

LORD C. HAMILTON explained, that in what he had said he had no wish to raise a personal question. What he said was, that the first important vote on Irish subjects at the time to which he referred was with reference to the Appropriation Clause, and that on a division on that question, Gentlemen opposite obtained the Government; while, for a period of six years, when they were in office, the question had never been carried out. He did also venture to say, that the course taken by those hon. Gentlemen did somewhat encourage agitation.

SIR R. PEEL: Sir, it is my intention to support the proposition of Her Majesty's Government, and to give my vote in favour of the second reading of this Bill. I do so with the reluctance which every friend of constitutional liberty must feel in giving a vote for restraining that liberty; but my firm belief is that there is public danger in now permitting that Act to expire—that if you do permit it to expire, you must look forward to a renewal of those attempts by which the public tranquillity was disturbed in Ireland during the last year. I acknowledge that some obligation is due to those who organised that disturbance of the public peace, inasmuch as they have contrived to cover Irish treason with ridicule. They have thus done more to discourage rebellion than all the laws we can pass, or than all the advice that the temperate or the sagacious could give. But notwithstanding the ridicule that has been thrown upon Irish disaffection, still there does prevail among them an animus not yet repressed. They still profess their mischievous intentions, and I will pay them the compliment of believing them to be sincere. I shall not give my vote on this measure from any personal confidence in those by whom the law is to be administered—that is, I would not consent, from my confidence in any set of men, to restrict constitutional liberty, if I did not believe the restriction to be absolutely necessary. I have a great respect personally for the Earl of Clarendon, but my respect for the Earl of Clarendon does not influence in the slightest degree my resolution to support this proposition. Unless I were satisfied that the measure was called for by a pressing necessity, no respect for the person of Lord Clarendon, no belief that the powers conferred by it would not be wantonly abused, would induce me to give my support to such a Bill. There is great evil in the precedent of imposing a restriction on the liberty of the subject, no matter to whose hands the power may be entrusted, no matter how high may be the personal character of those by whom it is to be exercised. You cannot set the precedent of suspending the Habeas Corpus Act, without doing great public injury, even if the extraordinary power which suspension confers, be never called into action. With respect to the question of confidence, I have heard much for the last twenty or thirty years about powers being refused to Government from a want of confidence in them. Now, I believe that no Government ever asked for such extraordinary powers as the suspending of the Habeas Corpus Act, unless they believed them to be necessary for the public safety. There is no pleasure in the conflict for unnecessary powers. Neither Lord Heytesbury nor Earl De Grey would have abused these powers any more than the Earl of Clarendon; and it is childish to justify a vote for placing such powers in the hands of any man on the ground of having confidence in his personal character. I agree to this Bill because I believe it to be necessary, and on that ground alone would I consent to its enactment.

Nothing can be more painful to me than to refer to the history of past contests on questions of Irish policy. So much evil has arisen from the practice of making Ireland the arena of our party contests, that I, for one, have resolved never to set the example. There is ample ground for our mature and dispassionate consideration of the measures that are necessary for the improvement of that unfortunate country, without reverting to past conflicts, or making Ireland the stage upon which to determine our present party strifes. But the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) has undertaken to give us what he calls a history of the events of 1846; and it is very difficult for me to listen to him, and to remain absolutely silent, without being supposed to acquiesce in the truth of that history. The chief measure alluded to, the Appropriation Clause, has been now defunct for thirteen years, and if the noble Lord had said that he was about to pronounce a funeral oration, to favour us with a panegyric on a faithful and departed friend, I should not have objected to some allowable exaggeration of his merits. But the noble Lord appears in the character of an historian, and professes to put on record the true account of the Appropriation Clause. Now, my memory differs in some important points from that of the noble Lord. The noble Lord states truly, that in 1835, soon after I succeeded Lord Melbourne in the Administration, I brought forward a measure for the adjustment of the question of Irish tithe. The noble Lord says, "In bringing forward the Appropriation Clause, in connection with that measure, I acted in my individual capacity. Could anybody expect that I should abstain from putting upon record my own personal opinions?" I had always thought that the Motion which led to the extinction of that Government had more of the character of a party Motion than the noble Lord is willing to admit; that it was not a mere individual Motion on the part of the noble Lord; but that the noble Lord and the whole of his party determined to obstruct the proposal with respect to tithe unless the Appropriation Clause formed a part of it. The noble Lord was not content with moving an Amendment during the progress of the Bill; but, if I recollect right, he called upon the House to put upon record this proposition—that no adjustment of Irish tithe ever can be satisfactory, unless a portion of the revenues of the Irish Church be appropriated to educational purposes. I remonstrated against that proceeding. I said, "Pass this Bill, the object of which you approve; or if there must be a condition attached to it, take the opportunity of moving amendments in the Bill during its progress." I also said to the noble Lord, "Beware of fettering your future course by any abstract resolution, declaring that at no time to come shall there be any adjustment of Irish tithe, unless there be an alienation of ecclesiastical property." I was giving friendly advice to the noble Lord at that time. I could have had no other motive, according to the noble Lord's own account, for he says, that during the three months I remained in power, I never had the good fortune to be in a majority. I must have known, therefore, that my doom was sealed. But the noble Lord was not merely content with passing the abstract resolution. Nothing could satisfy him but that the whole House should wait on King William, and inform His Majesty that no adjustment of Irish tithe could ever take place, unless there was an alienation of Church property. The noble Lord, however, notwithstanding all this, thinks that the Motion he then brought forward, did not at all partake of the character of a party Motion. This shows how apt contemporaries are to be deceived. It certainly was the impression, the erroneous impression, at the time, that there was a determination on the part of the noble Lord and of his Whig supporters, and of the Irish Members generally, that to settle Irish tithes without alienation was not to be tolerated—that the attempt was an iniquity not to be borne. It occurred to some—(but of course that was quite a subordinate consideration)—that there was an opportunity for a good party Motion, which would be the best way of turning out Sir Robert Peel. And so it proved. The noble Lord returned to power, and what account does he give of his Irish allies? He says, "I came into power—I found the House of Lords against the Appropriation Clause—the English public were not very well disposed towards it, but my Irish friends relieved me from any difficulty about it, and I found among the people of Ireland complete indifference on the subject." This is the account we have of the great Irish party, who for five or six years before were so clamouring against the abomination of the Irish Church—who declared that there never would be peace while that Church remained in possession of her revenues—who insisted upon it that the Government which was formed in November, 1834, could not be permitted to exist, guilty as it was of attempting to remedy some of the evils accompanying the tithe system, without consenting to an alienation of Church property. What a picture the noble Lord draws of his Irish allies when he says, that the moment the *personnel* of the Government was changed, their clamour on this subject abated!

Lord J. RUSSELL: No; it was three years afterwards.

Sir R. PEEL: Well, it took the noble Lord three years to make them cool. I appeal to any man whether it would have been decent for them to lose their heat at an earlier period. They were gradually exposed to the mild influence of office; it is no imputation upon them whatever to say that under a Whig Government they got their fair share of official patronage; and about two or three years afterwards their hostility to the Established Church abated, and they fairly told the noble Lord they could give him no cordial support in an attempt to divert its revenues. I trust that if they should again press the noble Lord upon any particular measure he will ask them to pause—that he will remind them of the Irish Church—that he will tell them to wait two or three years, and he will then possibly find that, in the interval, their zeal will be less ardent. There can be no doubt that in deciding on the merits of Irish questions, it does make a very material difference who are the persons who occupy that [*pointing to the Treasury*] bench. The noble Lord has received from the Irish representatives a much more cordial support than would have been accorded to me, if I had proposed precisely the same measures, under precisely the same circumstances. To conclude the history of 1835, the noble Lord's resolution was resisted by the House of Lords. I said to the noble Lord, "You shall hear no reproach—no taunt from me; but you had better settle the tithe question without the Appropriation Clause." He took my advice, and there let the matter remain. Now, with regard to what occurred in 1846. I am sure I entertain no ill-will to the noble Lord—I entertain no ill-will towards anybody, for the course that was taken in 1846. I, and those who concurred with me in 1846, as to the necessity of repealing the corn laws, felt the alienation of the party with which we had acted to be inevitable. The loss of their confidence was the certain consequence of the course we considered it was our duty to take. In what manner that loss of confidence was manifested, is a matter of subordinate concern. But the noble Lord will give me leave to remind him that he is not quite accurate in the account he has given of the events of 1846. Several shocking murders were committed in Ireland, and we proposed a measure for the purpose of giving security to life and property in that country. Perhaps the noble Lord remembers the way in which that measure was encountered. The application for leave to introduce the Bill was opposed, and on, I believe, the second reading we were defeated. I made an appeal to the noble Lord to allow us to put the Bill into Committee. I said, "Do not reject this measure, intended for the protection of life, and the prevention of assassination, on the second reading. You object to the curfew clause; strike it out in Committee; but do not give agitators and assassins a triumph by refusing to give a second reading to a measure which has such objects in view." The noble Lord now says that he thought particular clauses were not calculated to attain the professed objects of the Bill; but why not have proposed to omit such clauses in Committee? Why not permit a fair deliberation on the details of the measure? "But," says the noble Lord, "you intended to commit the enormity of confining people to their houses at night." It is a hard necessity that compels public men to propose measures of coercion. The noble Lord himself is now proposing a measure which will enable him to confine people without trial both by night and day. This is all I have to observe with reference to the history of 1835 and 1846. I certainly shall not attach to my support of this Bill even that condition which the noble Lord suggested when opposing the Bill of 1846—that comprehensive measures of a healing nature ought to precede measures of coercion. I know the extreme difficulty of proposing measures of a healing nature. I believe we are all deeply convinced that the one great evil of this united kingdom is the condition of Ireland. I believe there is an universal desire to administer remedies; but

I know perfectly well that no Government can propose any measure which could have any immediate tendency to improve the social condition of Ireland. It is rather by the slow and healing process that we are to hope to overcome these difficulties—not by great measures, which everybody calls for, but which few choose to shadow out. What are the great measures which are to restore peace? I believe one of the greatest evils in Ireland at present is connected with the administration of the poor-law. That subject you are about to consider in the Committee which has been appointed; and most gratified I shall be if from that Committee there comes forth any plan calculated to improve the condition of the poor, and to remedy the defects in the administration of the poor-law. I shall give my support to this measure for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, because I believe it to be called for by regard for public peace. I believe that the Government has—and I believe that other Governments have also had—a sincere desire to improve the condition of Ireland; and I will not weaken or qualify my support of this measure of coercion by insisting, as a stipulation, that before I assent to it I will know what remedial measures are contemplated. I give an entire and cordial support to a Bill which I believe to be necessary for the vindication of the law, and for upholding the authority of the Crown.

Lord J. RUSSELL explained: In respect to the Motion of 1835, I do not believe I said—at least, I did not mean to say—that it was not a party Motion; what I said was this—that having consented to separate from my own friends in the Cabinet upon that question, I was not to refrain from bringing it forward because the right hon. Baronet (Sir R. Peel) was in power, inasmuch as I had advocated the same views while in office.

Mr. MOORE read an extract from a former speech of the First Lord of the Treasury, to the effect that measures to suppress crime in Ireland should not be introduced unaccompanied by such other measures as might enable the peasantry of that country to obtain subsistence. He (Mr. Moore) refused his assent to the present Bill on similar grounds, and he entreated the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) to suspend its progress until he had had time to introduce such remedial measures as the state of the country required.

House divided on Question, " That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:" —Ayes 275; Noes 33: Majority 242.

List of the Ayes.

Abdy, T. N.
Adair, H. E.
Adair, R. A. S.
Alcock, T.
Anson, hon. Col.
Arbuthnott, hon. H.
Arkwright, G.
Armstrong, R. B.
Arundel and Surrey, Earl of
Bagshaw, J.
Baines, M. T.
Baring, rt. hon. Sir F. T.
Baring, T.
Barrington, Visct.
Bateson, T.
Bellew, R. M.
Bennet, P.
Beresford, W.
Berkeley, C. L. G.
Bernal, R.
Bernard, Visct.
Birch, Sir T. B.
Blackall, S. W.
Blakemore, R.
Boldero, H. G.
Bourke, R. S.
Bouverie, hon. E. P.
Boyle, hon. Col.
Bremridge, R.
Broadwood, H.
Brockman, E. D.
Brotherton, J.
Brown, H.
Brown, W.
Buller, Sir J. Y.
Bunbury, E. H.
Burke, Sir T. J.
Burroughs, H. N.
Buxton, Sir E. N.
Campbell, hon. W. F.
Cardwell, E.
Carew, W. H. P.
Carter, J. B.
Cavendish, hon. C. C.
Chaplin, W. J.
Charteris, hon. F.
Childers, J. W.
Christopher, R. A.
Clay, J.
Clements, hon. C. S.
Clerk, rt. hon. Sir G.
Cochrane, A. D. R. W. B.
Cockburn, A. J. E.
Cocks, T. S.
Cole, hon. H. A.
Colebrooke, Sir T. E.
Coles, H. B.
Copeland, Ald.
Craig, W. G.
Crowder, R. B.
Cubitt, W.
Dalrymple, Capt.
Dawson, hon. T. V.
Deedes, W.
Dick, Q.
Disraeli, B.
Divett, E.
Dod, J. W.
Dodd, G.
Douglas, Sir C. E.
Douro, Marq. of
Drumlanrig, Visct.
Drummond, H.
Duckworth, Sir J. T. B.
Duff, G. S.
Duke, Sir J.
Duncan, G.
Duncuft, J.
Dundas, Adm.
Dundas, Sir D.
Dundas, G.
Ebrington, Visct.
Egerton, W. T.
Ellis, J.
Elliot, hon. J. E.
Enfield, Visc.
Farrer, J.
Ferguson, Sir R. A.
FitzPatrick, rt. hon. J.
Floyer, J.
Foley, J. H. H.
Forster, M.
Frewen, C. H.
Fuller, A. E.
Gaskell, J. M.
Gladstone, rt. hon. W. E.
Glynn, G. C.
Godson, R.
Gooch, E. S.
Gordon, Adm.
Goulburn, rt. hon. H.
Grace, O. D. J.
Graham, rt. hon. Sir J.
Granby, Marq. of
Granger, T. C.
Greenall, G.
Grenfell, C. P.
Grenfell, C. W.
Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.
Grey, R. W.
Grogan, E.
Gwyn, H.
Haggitt, F. R.
Hallyburton, Lord J. F.
Halsey, T. P.
Hamilton, J. H.
Hamilton, Lord C.
Harris, R.
Hastie, A.
Hawes, B.
Hay, Lord J.
Hayter, W. G.
Headlam, T. E.
Heald, J.
Henley, J. W.
Henry, A.
Herbert, H. A.
Herries, rt. hon. J. C.
Hervey, Lord A.
Heyworth, L.
Hobhouse, rt. hon. Sir J.
Hobhouse, T. B.
Hodges, T. T.
Hogg, Sir J. W.
Hood, Sir A.

Hornby, J.
Howard, Lord E.
Howard, hon. C. W. G.
Howard, Sir R.
Hume, J.
Humphery, Ald.
Inglis, Sir R. H.
Jackson, W.
Jervis, Sir J.
Jolliffe, Sir W. G. H.
Keppel, hon. G. T.
Ker, R.
King, hon. P. J. L.
Knox, Col.
Labouchere, rt. hon. H.
Lascelles, hon. W. S.
Law, hon. C. E.
Legh, G. C.
Leslie, C. P.
Lewis, rt. hon. Sir T. F.
Lewis, G. C.
Lincoln, Earl of
Lindsay, hon. Col.
Littleton, hon. E. R.
Locke, J.
Lockhart, A. E.
Lockhart, W.
Lowther, H.
Mackenzie, W. F.
Mackinnon, W. A.
Macnaghten, Sir E.
Macnamara, Maj.
M'Gregor, J.
Mahon, The O'Gorman
Mahon, Visct.
Maitland, T.
Mandeville, Visct.
Mangles, R. D.
Marshall, W.
Martin, S.
Masterman, J.
Matheson, A.
Matheson, Col.
Maule, rt. hon. F.
Melgund, Visct.
Milner, W. M. E.
Milton, Visct.
Mitchell, T. A.
Monsell, W.
Moody, C. A.
Morgan, O.
Mulgrave, Earl of
Mullings, J. R.
Napier, J.
Neeld, J.
Neeld, J.
Newport, Visct.
Newry and Morne, Visct.
Norreys, Lord
Nugent, Lord
Pakington, Sir J.
Palmer, R.
Palmer, R.
Palmerston, Visct.
Parker, J.
Patten, J. W.
Peel, rt. hon. Sir R.
Peel, Col.
Perfect, R.
Pigot, Sir R.
Pigott, F.
Plowden, W. H. C.
Plumptre, J. P.
Powlett, Lord W.
Raphael, A.
Renton, J. C.
Ricardo, O.
Rich, H.
Richards, R.
Romilly, Sir J.
Russell, Lord J.
Russell, hon. E. S.
Russell, F. C. H.
St. George, C.
Sandars, G.
Sandars, J.
Scrope, G. P.
Seymer, H. K.
Seymour, Lord
Shafto, R. D.
Sheil, rt. hon. R. L.
Shelburne, Earl of
Sheridan, R. B.
Sidney, Ald.
Simeon, J.
Slaney, R. A.
Smith, rt. hon. R. V.
Smith, J. A.
Smyth, J. G.
Somerville, rt. hon. Sir W. M.
Spearman, H. J.
Spooner, R.
Stafford, A.
Stansfield, W. R. C.
Staunton, Sir G. T.
Strickland, Sir G.
Stuart, Lord D.
Stuart, H.
Talfourd, Serj.
Tancred, H. W.
Taylor, T. E.
Thompson, Col.
Thompson, Ald.
Thornely, T.
Towneley, J.
Townshend, Capt.
Trelawny, J. S.
Trevor, hon. G. R.
Trollope, Sir J.
Turner, G. J.
Tyrell, Sir J. T.
Vane, Lord H.
Verner, Sir W.
Verney, Sir H.
Villiers, hon. C.
Waddington, H. S.
Walpole, S. H.
Walsh, Sir J. B.
Walter, J.
Ward, H. G.
Watkins, Col. L.
Wellesley, Lord C.
Williams, H.
Willoughby, Sir H.
Wilson, J.
Wilson, M.
Wood, rt. hon. Sir C.
Wrightson, W. B.
Wyvill, M.
Young, Sir J.

TELLERS.

Tufnell, H.
Hill, Lord M.

List of the Noes.

Anstey, T. C.
Barron, Sir H. W.
Blewitt, R. J.
Bright, J.
Callaghan, D.
Caulfeild, J. M.
Corbally, M. E.
Devereux, J. T.
Dunne, F. P.
Fagan, W.
Fox, R. M.
Grattan, H.
Greene, J.
Kershaw, J.
Lushington, C.
Meagher, T.
Moore, G. H.
Mowatt, F.
Muntz, G. F.
O'Connell, J.
O'Connor, F.
O'Flaherty, A.
Osborne, R.
Pilkington, J.
Power, N.
Reynolds, J.
Roche, E. B.
Scholefield, W.
Scully, F.
Sullivan, M.
Tenison, E. K.
Thompson, G.
Williams, J.

TELLERS.

Crawford, W. S.
Sadleir, J.

Main Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

SUSPENSION OF THE HABEAS CORPUS ACT—EXPLANATION.

Mr. J. O'CONNELL asked whether the right hon. Baronet the Secretary for Ireland adhered to his own words as uttered in the course of the debate on the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, or whether he adopted the entire contradiction of them by the noble Lord at the head of the Government?

Sir W. SOMERVILLE replied that there had not been any contradiction of them given by the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell), and that nothing more surprised him than the extraordinary misconstruction of his (Sir W. Somerville's) words by the hon. Member for Limerick.

INLAND REVENUE.

The House then went into Committee on the Inland Revenue Bill.

Sir H. WILLOUGHBY wished to know how it was proposed to pay the Commissioners provided for in this Bill, as there was no allusion to that matter in any of the clauses? He wished to know what amount of salary these gentlemen were to receive, and whether the sum would be brought annually before Parliament.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER said, their salaries would be the same as was now received by the Commissioners of Excise. They would, of course, be voted by Parliament, but he thought it better to postpone that question till the Bill was before them which provided for the amalgamation of the Excise and Customs Board.

Mr. HUME asked how many Commissioners there would be under the new arrangement?

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: There were now twelve—they would be reduced to seven.

MR. HUME: And what will be the reduction in the expenditure?

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, the immediate reduction would be 16,000*l.*, and when the arrangements were completed it would amount to between 80,000*l.* or 90,000*l.*

MR. HUME: What is 80,000*l.* or 90,000*l.* in an expenditure of 700,000*l.*?

COLONEL SIBTHORP hoped this reduction would not fall, as it was usually made to do, upon the clerks.

MR. HENLEY hoped it was clearly understood that the Commissioners would take office subject to such recommendations as Parliament might make, for at present the House were going on rather in the dark.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, that no new appointment would take place under the consolidation proposed. All the Commissioners to be retained under the present Bill were now in office and were receiving salaries, and he did not suppose hon. Gentlemen would put them in a worse situation under the Consolidation Bill than they now occupied.

MR. HENLEY thought it important that the House should guard against the Commissioners being put in a better position than they were at present, and that it should not be supposed that Parliament shut the door against future alterations.

MR. HUME thought that money and time would alike be saved if the arrangements under the Bill were placed in the hands of one able individual.

The several clauses of the Bill then passed through Committee.

SUPPLY.

The House having resumed, went again into Committee, and passed the ordinary vote of 17,786,700*l.* to pay off and discharge Exchequer Bills charged on the aids of 1849 unprovided for.

In reply to Mr. HUME,

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, the amount was less than last year.

House adjourned at half-past Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, February 12, 1848.

MINUTES.] CONFERENCE. Ingrossing and Inrolment of Bills.

PETITIONS PRESENTED. From the City of Glasgow, that no Tax may be imposed on British Seamen, for the Relief of Merchant Seamen.—From Nenagh, for an Alteration of the Present System of the Poor Law (Ireland).—From Manchester, for the Abolition of the national Custom of Public Prize-fighting.

INGROSSING, &c., OF BILLS.

A Conference was had with the Commons;—Report made—

"That the Commons had delivered a Paper, stating that they had taken into Consideration the Resolutions communicated to them by this House at the last Conference; and—

"That they propose to amend the First Resolution, by leaving out from the Words '(subject to the Regulation next herein-after mentioned):'

"That they propose to amend the Second Resolution, by leaving out from the Word 'That' to the Words 'it shall,' and inserting the Words 'when such Bill shall have passed both Houses of Parliament:'

"That they propose to amend the Third Resolution, by leaving out the Words 'proper Officers of each House,' and inserting the Words 'Clerk of the Parliaments, or other proper Officer of the House of Lords:' And also,

"That they agree to the other Resolutions, without Amendment."

Commons' Amendments *considered* and *agreed to*.

NORTH WALES RAILWAY.

LORD MONTEAGLE, in calling the attention of the House to this subject, said, that he had no personal interest whatever in the matter. The noble Lord then recapitulated the facts as to the orders which were made by the House last Session for the production of the accounts of the company, and the disobedience to those orders which had been shown by the officers of the company. He complained also that the directors of the company had improperly lent a portion of the funds of the North Wales Railway to the Richmond Railway Company. The pretext that the accounts of the company could not be rendered because the company was involved in a Chancery suit, ought not to be received by their Lordships as a sufficient reason. If the principle were admitted that railway companies might refuse to render an account upon the ground of proceedings in Chancery, their Lordships might depend upon it, that whenever a case occurred which they desired to keep from the knowledge of Parliament, a friendly suit in that court would be instituted for the sole purpose of evading inquiry into their affairs. Another motive stated by this company for not furnishing the documents required by the House was, that not being able to dissolve legally, they had been obliged to divide the money among the proprietors. The justification, therefore, for not obeying their Lordships' orders was actually that they had violated the law. Their own wrong-doing was pleaded as an excuse for disobeying that House. Under the circumstances, he was desirous of urging upon the House to support its own authority. Let their Lordships remember that railway companies were created by Act of Parliament, that Parliament had given them enormous powers, and that if Parliament did not exercise some controlling power over their proceedings, the safety of public life and public property would be endangered. In pressing this matter on their Lordships' consideration, he begged it might be expressly understood that he had no individual object in view, his only desire being to bring under the consideration of Parliament the present state of the law with relation to the security of railway property and the public interest therein. He had introduced a Bill in the course of the last Session, having reference to the auditing of the accounts of railway companies, which had received the entire sanction of their Lordships. The Bill, however, had failed in another place; and he would leave it to their Lordships and to the country to say whether the circumstances of the last year had not afforded fair ground for believing that the Bill would have been attended with satisfactory results. In the course of last year some of the largest railway companies were obliged to publish balance sheets of their accounts, in order to set their affairs right with the public; but were not those statements merely certificates of character drawn up by their own officers? How much better would it not have been, and how much more satisfactory, to have had those accounts publicly audited. This appropriation of money, originally subscribed to make a railway in North Wales, to the costruction of a railway in Surrey, showed the necessity of providing a remedy to meet the abuses which had crept into the present law. The question now at issue resolved itself into two—namely, whether a contempt of that House had been committed; and second, the unsatisfactory state of the present law. He thought he had made out a case, with relation to these accounts, to show that there were abuses under the existing state of the law. This being admitted, it behoved their Lordships to see how far the law required to be altered, to prevent, as in the present case, fraudulent concealment of facts and contempt of their Lordships' House. Though he was far from having abandoned the question of contempt, he should at present take no steps with regard to the individuals who had been in attendance at the bar (Mr. Chadwick and Mr. Marriner), but propose a Committee to consider how far it was expedient to provide by law for a better audit of railway accounts. To that Committee he should propose to refer the accounts of the North Wales Railway Company, as part of their duties, with instructions to report thereon; and he should take no steps, as affecting the individuals in question, until the House saw, by the report, the exact state in which the accounts were found.

Lord BROUGHAM had a strong opinion with respect to the question of contempt now involved; however, he thought it would be better first to get the accounts, and after the inquiry, which he presumed would not be long, they could enter on the question of privilege. While he was on his legs he would trespass on their Lordships' attention for a few moments while he alluded to a subject, connected with the safety of the public, which had been brought under the notice of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council that day. The case was one in which many of the most eminent engineers were examined touching the merits of a newly patented axletree for railway carriages. The axle was called Hardy's Patent Axle; and the members of the Council, under whose notice it had been brought, were of opinion, that nothing could be more satisfactory than the success of the improvement which it effected over the common or ordinary axle. The axle had been subjected to a weight of 150 tons; and although the carriage to which it was attached was propelled at the rate of sixty miles per hour, the axle, so far from breaking suddenly, as ordinary axles did, bent into a circular shape, without a single fracture affecting the mass. Mr. Stephenson, who was examined upon the subject, approved of it highly, and stated, that out of fifty common axles subject to the same power only two were unbroken. Moreover, the patent axle could be supplied 30 per cent cheaper than the common description, which proved its superiority in another respect. The experiments which had been made were of so satisfactory a character, and the improvement so well calculated to promote the public safety, that he considered himself justified in bringing the subject under their Lordships' consideration.

The MARQUESS of LANSDOWNE was understood to express his approval of the course proposed by Lord Monteagle.

The EARL of MINTO observed, that, with reference to the North Wales Railway Company, there had been a clear case established against them of contempt of their Lordships' House; and, under those circumstances, he thought it would be well, in the first place, to deal with the party guilty.

Order for the attendance of William Chadwick and John Marriner at the bar of the House this day discharged:—Ordered, that the said William Chadwick and John Marriner attend at the bar of this House on Thursday next, at Five o'clock.

House adjourned until To-morrow.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, February 12, 1849.

MINUTES.] NEW MEMBER SWORN. For Bolton, Sir Joshua Walmsley, Knt.

PUBLIC BILLS.—*Reported.*—Habeas Corpus Suspension (Ireland).

CONFERENCE.—Ingrossing and Inrolling of Bills.

PETITIONS PRESENTED. By Mr. William Brown, from the Parish of Great Saint Helens, London, for an Alteration of the Law respecting the Church of England Clergy.—By Lord Seymour, from the Town of Totness, for the Suppression of the Slave Trade.—By Mr. Thornely, from James Harvey, of Liverpool, for an Alteration of the Present Currency.—By Mr. Coke, from several Tenants of Copyhold Property, in the Parishes of Burnham (Norfolk), for an Alteration of the Law respecting Copyholds.—By Mr. Cornewall Lewis, from the Board of Guardians of the Hereford Union, for the Suppression of Mendicancy.—By Mr. Farrer, from Shipowners, and Others, of the Port of Stockton-upon-Tees, against a Repeal of the Navigation Laws.—By Mr. Beckett, from the Township of Leeds, for an Alteration of the Poor Law.—By Sir Thomas Burke, from the Ratepayers, and Others, of the Tuam Union; and by Mr. Leslie, from the Board of Guardians of the Monaghan Union, for an Alteration of the Poor Law (Ireland).—By Mr. Osman Ricardo, from the Mayor and Inhabitants of the City of Worcester, for Referring War Disputes to Arbitration.

RAILWAY TRAVELLING ON SUNDAYS.

MR. LOCKE rose, pursuant to notice, to ask the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Labouchere), whether it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to introduce, during the present Session, any measure for securing to the public, on Sundays, the limited use of those railways which were open for passenger traffic during the week?

MR. LABOUCHERE said, the Government had no present intention of proposing a measure to compel railways to carry passengers on Sundays. At the same time, he desired not to preclude himself against the right of bringing forward such a measure, if he should see cause for doing so. The Railway Commissioners had expressed their feelings very plainly upon the matter, by refusing to sanction by-laws for shutting up certain lines on Sundays—and he could not too strongly express his own individual opinion that it was perfectly possible to open railways on the Sabbath under such proper limitations as should avoid any unnecessary desecration of that day, and should be perfectly compatible at once with the convenience of the public, and the proper respect due to the Sabbath. He hoped that public opinion would be strong enough to induce those companies which had taken a different view of the subject to adopt the course which was more in accordance with custom in this country. He confessed he was most reluctant to introduce any thing like a compulsory measure upon a point involving the conscientious religious scruples of any considerable body of people, except in cases of extreme necessity; and he was happy to say that about half the railways in Scotland did at this time allow trains to run on the Sunday.

THE NAVIGATION LAWS.

MR. HERRIES inquired of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Labouchere) what course he proposed taking with respect to the Committee on the Navigation Laws, which was among the orders for that evening, but which, from the business that should precede it, was not likely to be brought on that evening, and he was, therefore, desirous of knowing if the right hon. Gentleman would take it on another day, and if so, on what day? He should also wish to know whether the resolution which was to be proposed now was so nearly in accordance with the resolution proposed last Session, as that the understanding come to on that occasion should be now acted upon—viz., to allow the first reading of the Bill to take place, for the purpose of its circulation through the country, and then to let the discussion be afterwards had on the second reading, when they could enter upon the discussion with a general knowledge of the intentions of the Government on the question. It was important, then, for those who wished to take a part in the discussion, to know whether or not the present resolutions were the same, or nearly so, as those of last year.

MR. LABOUCHERE hoped that their discussions on the subject last Session would not be altogether thrown away, but might have the effect of saving the time of the House now. In answer to the question of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Herries), he begged to state that it would not be in their power, from the state of the business, to bring forward the Committee on the navigation laws that evening; he should, therefore, postpone it to Wednesday the 14th instant. As to the resolution he proposed moving, he could not certainly say that it would be identically the same as that proposed last Session. He was unwilling to lay it on the table, unaccompanied by any explanation, as the absence of all explanation might give rise to a belief that might not be well founded as to the nature of the modifications proposed. He also thought it expedient that a general resolution of that kind should not be laid on the table before moving the Committee, as it only gave rise to a discussion on the question of the Speaker leaving the chair, instead of that discussion being reserved for the more appropriate occasion of the Committee of the whole House. He was, therefore, reluctant to lay the resolution now upon the table; but he trusted the right hon. Gentleman would reserve any opposition he might have to the Bill until its second reading, and that he would find no difficulty in agreeing to the preliminary resolution on which the Bill was to be founded.

Mr. HERRIES hoped that ample time would be allowed to intervene between the proposing of the resolution and the second reading of the Bill.

THE INFANT PAUPER ESTABLISHMENT AT TOOTING.

Viscount DRUMLANRIG inquired if Mr. Drouet, against whom a coroner's jury had returned a verdict of manslaughter, was still at the head of the pauper establishment at Tooting; also, what number of children were still there?

Mr. BAINES stated, that Mr Drouet had certainly not been convicted of any offence whatever; but he had been put upon his trial upon two or three criminal charges, and that circumstance was sufficient to induce him (Mr. Baines) not to take any further steps as regarded that individual. When the cholera broke out in Mr. Drouet's establishment in the beginning of January last there were 1,372 children in the house, who had been sent there by thirteen different unions. As soon as the cholera made its appearance, the Poor Law Board issued circulars to all those unions, pressing on them in the strongest terms the necessity of providing, without delay, suitable places for the reception of those children, in order that they might be removed at the earliest possible period. That circular had been repeated from time to time. Twelve out of the thirteen unions had been able to provide places for the reception of the children, which they deemed suitable. The thirteenth union—that of Chelsea—had reported to the Poor Law Board that, notwithstanding every endeavour on their part, they had not been able to meet with a suitable place. And, no doubt, there would be a difficulty in procuring suitable accommodation for them. The workhouse was already full, and the owners of private property were naturally unwilling to receive into that property persons coming from an establishment where the cholera had existed. The number of children now at Mr. Drouet's was 223, consisting of those belonging to the Chelsea union, and of others from other parishes, who had laboured under cholera, but were now convalescent, although they had not yet been certified as in a fit state to be removed. He was happy to add, that no fresh case of cholera had occurred in Tooting since Saturday the 13th January last.

PUBLIC ADVANCES IN AID OF THE POOR-LAW (IRELAND).

Sir H. WILLOUGHBY inquired, pursuant to notice, of the right hon. Baronet the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if any expenditure of public money in aid of the poor-law administration in Ireland, and if any, to what amount, and to what unions, had been authorised under the minute of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, dated the 16th day of January, 1849.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER said, the hon. Baronet might remember that in the statement which he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) made to the House last Wednesday, he said that in accordance with what he believed was the general understanding of the House, Her Majesty's Government were invested with the discretionary power of making small advances to Irish unions for the sole purpose of preserving the people from absolute starvation; and that in the exercise of such discretion, the Government had made grants amounting to about 3,000*l*. He had now to state that the actual sum advanced was 2,650*l*., and that it was distributed amongst the unions of Scarriff, Kenmare, Ballina, Westport, and Bantry.

RAILWAY BOARD.

Mr. BREMRIDGE asked the President of the Board of Trade, whether (after the notice of a Bill for consolidating the Boards of Excise and Taxes) it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to continue the present Railway Board as an independent Board, or whether Her Majesty)s Government contemplated, in the present Session of Parliament, bringing forward any measure to place the railway business of the country under the management of the Board of Trade?

Mr. LABOUCHERE, in answer to the question, was understood to say, that it was not in the contemplation of Government to bring in a Bill to abolish the Railway Board. Considerable reductions had been made in the railway department, but he did not think that the Railway Commission would be made a branch of the Board of Trade, and abolished as an independent board.

CALIFORNIA.

Sir DE L. EVANS said, that he understood there were six ships going from London and Liverpool with merchants and passengers to California, men of high respectability and of different professions. It was also probable that a still greater number of ships would go. It was understood, that they required some sort of protection, and he wished to know if a vessel of war would be stationed at St. Francisco?

Sir F. BARING said, that the general instruction to the admiral on that station, was to attend and give protection to trade. He had already received a communication from that officer, which showed him that the subject had not been neglected by him; but he could not hold out any expectation that a ship would be permanently stationed in California.

Sir DE L. EVANS said, that he understood the orders were for a ship to touch once in three months, which he considered was not sufficient.

THE NEW HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

Mr. OSBORNE asked the hon. Member for Lancaster (Mr. Greene), in the absence of the officials connected with the Woods and Forests, what progress had been made in the building of the New Houses of Parliament?

Mr. GREENE said, that the question would be best answered by looking at the Houses themselves. It was rather difficult to state what progress had been made in the several departments. He could not state when this House would occupy the New Houses of Parliament; he did not imagine it would be during the present Session. A certain delay had arisen from want of money for carrying on the works, which were not proceeded with so rapidly as the architect desired.

THE PUBLIC REVENUE.

Mr. HUME wished to asked a question of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It would be recollected. that last Session the House entered into a resolution that the gross revenue of the country should be paid into the Exchequer. He wished to know whether the gross revenue of the Customs and Excise, agreeably to the resolution, was to be paid into the Exchequer and brought to the public acccount or not?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER said, that it would have been the more convenient course for the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hume) to have given notice of the question to be put. He was not prepared to say, that it was for the advantage of the public revenue or the advantage of the public service, that the whole amount of the gross revenue should be paid into the Exchequer.

INGROSSED BILLS.

The Resolutions relating to Ingrossed Bills were considered. Amendments proposed and agreed to:—Resolutions communicated to the Lords at a Conference; —Conferences had; — Reported that the Lords agree to the Commons' Amendments.

[Commons' Votes, No. 8, sec. 65.]

HABEAS CORPUS SUSPENSION (IRELAND) BILL.

On the Motion for the House going into Committee on this Bill,

Mr. J. O'CONNELL rose to move an instruction to the Committee. It was intended to bring out what might be the real meaning and scope of the powers to be given by this Bill, because as yet he said they were not able to judge of the whole extent and bearing of those powers. There was a difference amongst the parties to whom they were referred. In the first place, look at the Queen's Speech. He saw that Her Majesty's Ministers in drawing up the Speech distinctly stated that insurrection still existed in Ireland; and the necessity of renewing the powers was distinctly based on the asserted fact that disaffection still existed there. The statement in the Royal Speech was put in for the sake of the dishonour of the thing. It was not thought right that the less excuseable objects and the true objects should be put into the mouth of the illustrious Occupant of the Throne. There was little care how the parties acted in common fairness to the country, provided they set their feet on the neck of the country. We had the letter of the Lord Lieutenant corroborated by the speech of the right hon. Baronet the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and then the pretext of disaffection was utterly thrown aside; they did not attempt to bring it forward, or maintain it for one moment. On the contrary, the Gentlemen who were put forward to speak the echo to the Speech, distinctly admitted that no such thing as disaffection existed in Ireland. The Lord Lieutenant himself came out with the real reason. He confessed that the real meaning of the Bill, the real object of the powers accorded to him, was to put down discussion in Ireland, to put down constitutional agitation in Ireland. We had then this discrepancy between the Monarch on the Throne and Her advisers in the House. We had still more—we had discrepancy between those advisers themselves in the House. The last night when this Bill came before us we had the Secretary for Ireland (Sir W. Somerville) standing up to give his version, and the Prime Minister contradicting him entirely. The Secretary for Ireland said that the Bill was not to be applied to such agitation as that to which he had alluded. The Prime Minister said, on the contrary, that it was to be so applied. Of course from the higher position in the Ministry of the noble Lord, we were to lay more stress on his words.

[The hon. Member was here interrupted by a Message from the Lords, desiring a conference on the Resolutions respecting the ingrossing and inrolling of Bills.]

Mr. O'CONNELL resumed. He had pointed out these four contradictions, and as the Bill itself gave no information on the subject, he thought it had now become absolutely necessary to make that other half of his speech which he received permission from the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) on Friday night to do. He begged to thank the noble Lord for that permission. It was something to be permitted to speak in that House, though they were denied the right in Ireland. He begged also to thank the noble Lord for the certificate of character which he had been good enough to give him. He would now refer again to the contradiction between the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) and his Secretary (Sir W. Somerville). The Secretary for Ireland said that the Lord Lieutenant would not presume to interfere with an agitation carried on for the repeal of the Union; the Premier said he would. He had no doubt the Premier was correct. He believed the Lord Lieutenant would presume to do anything after the audacity he had shown in mixing together men whose only crime consisted in their having done their duty honourably and blamelessly to their country, together with others who had been engaged in treasonable practices. The noble Lord had, in his explanation, laid great stress upon the danger of the Repeal Association. But if the noble Lord yielded the right to the people of Ireland to meet and hold adjourned meetings, he (Mr. J. O'Connell) would promise him he should have no cause to complain. He did not know whether the people of Ireland would wish to hold such meetings. He did not know whether or not he (Mr. J. O'Connell) would attend them. All he contended for was that their rights should not be taken from the people.

[The hon. Member was again interrupted by a Message from the Lords.]

Mr. J. O'CONNELL again resumed, and said, that the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) had implicated the Repeal Association most unfairly in the charge of tending towards insurrection and conspiracy. But he (Mr. J. O'Connell) begged to remind the House, that not one member of the Repeal Association had been for a single hour imprisoned by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland under the powers entrusted to him by the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. And when he (Mr. J. O'Connell) and the other members of the Association had been tried for sedition, it was proved that not one breach of the law had ever been committed at any of the meetings held under its auspices. It should be recollected, too, that that was proved after every means had been tried to catch them. They had an able reporter, sent by the Government, present at each of their meetings, and two constables to watch them. They were watched, in fact, as a cat watches a mouse. And, after all, the noble Lord was obliged to make the most he could of the—he would not call it "mock insurrection,"—but the wretched attempt at insurrection which had taken place. He called it a wretched attempt, for it was proved by the letters from America, to which so much allusion had been made, that not more than 200 persons were at any time gathered together; and that not more than thirty were armed for the purpose of taking an active part in it. He did not wish to say any thing harsh of the unfortunate persons who had taken part in that wretched affair: but he (Mr. J. O'Connell) thought they were the worst enemies of repeal. Reverting to the part taken by the noble Lord on the present occasion, he begged to ask him what he would have said had the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth come down to the House at the time of the reform agitation, and said, they could see what Chartism was—that Chartism was an offshoot of the reformers; and that the constitution should be suspended in order that Chartism might be put down? And further, that as the reformers were criminated by the fact of Chartism being an offshoot of reform, it was not enough that Chartism should be put down, but the agitation for reform should be put a stop to reform also. If it were brought home to himself in that manner, the noble Lord could feel it; but as it was only an Irish Member who had such a complaint to make, he took no notice of it. But did the noble Lord think they had heard nothing about the manner in which the Reform Bill was carried—of the manner in which the pressure from without was brought to bear upon the House of Lords? Did he think they had heard nothing of the fifty francs from the Home Office, that were sent on the letters to the leaders of the political unions through the country, encouraging them to march upon London? And had they heard nothing of the celebrated letter dated from the Home Office, signed by Thomas Young, and directed to Sir William Napier, asking him to take up arms? [*The hon. Gentleman read the letter, which has so often appeared.*] That letter was not the production of Thomas Young, but of his employers; of those who now occupy the Ministerial benches, and who were endeavouring to prevent constitutional agitation by those who had never broken the law. After that, he wished the noble Lord joy of his love of the constitution, and his zeal for the preservation of order in the country. He should beg to refer to one other subject which had been alluded to in the debate the other night—the conduct of the Irish Members during the great struggle between Whigs and Tories, from 1835 to 1840, and in particular the conduct of Mr. O'Connell. It was said that Mr. O'Connell had obtained patronage in return for the part he then took. But there was the evidence of Lord Melbourne that there never was a man who so little used any right of patronage he might have had. He (Mr. J. O'Connell) called upon any one to point out where and how his father had used the Government patronage for the benefit of himself or his family. There was indeed one brother of his (Mr. J. O'Connell), and another member of his family in Government employ; but that brother was appointed to the situation he held, not only without application, and without his knowledge, but actually whilst he was labouring earnestly and hard to place another person, an old and veteran reformer, in the situation. He (Mr. J. O'Connell) defied any man (and he had plenty of calumniators both in England and Ireland) to show that his late father had ever sold his country for patronage or profit. He defied any man to point out a single vote of his father's given in that House, that was not in accordance with his well-known opinions out of doors. In one case, that of the Appropriation Clause, it had been charged against Mr. O'Connell that he had yielded a principle. But what were the circumstances? The clause had been abandoned by Ministers, Ireland was being goaded into frenzy by the tithe massacres, and to prevent further bloodshed Mr. O'Connell agreed to a Tithe Bill without the clause. But he could tell the House that an equitable settlement of the Church question was still anxiously looked for by the Irish people. It was one that must be taken up, and before a fortnight he should himself submit a Motion to the House; then they would see whether the noble Lord at the head of the Government would stand by his old principles, and consent to apply the revenues of the Irish Established Church to secular and national purposes. He should now return to the noble Lord's allusions to agitation in Ireland; and he must say, from what he could gather, the mind of England was disappointed that there had not been better opportunities for using force in Ireland. The same mind would carry the present measure; but he warned the House that their success would only weaken the bonds between the two countries. It would do more towards separation than the most violent agitations supported by the ragged, shoeless, shirtless crew that had lately created disturbance could effect. He (Mr. J. O'Connell) expected more sympathy for the Irish nation from the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire (Mr. Disraeli) than he had exhibited. There was a sort of similarity between their positions, that should have caused that hon. Gentleman to lean more towards them. They formed the forlorn hope of constitutional liberty against tyranny. The hon. Member for Buckinghamshire had also a forlorn hope, but it was the forlorn hope of an exploded injustice. That hon. Gentleman ought to recollect the denunciations of Holy Writ against avarice and robbery and the grinding of the poor; and surely there could be no greater crime than for the rich to rob the poor man of his bread. So it was, however, that the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire took part against the Irish, for reasons which he (Mr. J. O'Connell) could not agree in, for he and those who acted with him were not disposed to—

> "Compound for sins that we're inclined to
> By damning those we have no mind to."

If the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire were "the coming man" whom he promised, he (Mr. J. O'Connell) thought that the day of his coming would be a day of bad omen indeed for England. For she would then have to prepare for a renewal of those restrictions which had fettered her trade, and Ireland would have to prepare for a renewal of that armed sectarianism which had been so long her curse and bane. The cry of English politicians had always been for peaceful applications for redress. The people of Ireland had agitated peacefully for years; but how little had they obtained by their forbearance. What consolation would it be to England to know that she had caused increased misery and ruin in Ireland, and that bloody devastation overspread the fair face of that country? Fox had been lately quoted in that House, but he prayed attention to two brief extracts from other constitutional writers. The first was from *Locke's Essay on Government*, and was as follows:—

> "Absolute power is inconsistent with civil society, and can be no form of civil government at all. Wherever any two men are who have no standing rule and common judge to appeal to for the determination of controversies of right betwixt them; there they are still in a state of nature and under all the inconveniences of it, with only this woful difference to the subject, or rather slave, of an absolute ruler, that whereas in the ordinary state of nature he has a liberty to judge of his right, and according to the best of his power to maintain it; now, when his right is invaded, he has not only no appeal as those in society ought to have, but, as if he were degraded from the common state of rational creatures, is denied a right to judge of or defend his right; and so is exposed to all the miseries and inconveniences that a man can fear from one who being in the unrestrained state of nature is yet corrupted by flattery and armed with power."

Now this would be the exact position of the people of Ireland if the present Bill passed. They would be in the hands of a man "corrupted by flattery and armed with power;" they would have "no judge to appeal to for the determination of controversies of right; the dictator Lord Lieutenant of Ireland would rule over them, and they would be, "not the subjects, but the slaves of an absolute ruler." The next extract was from Mr. Wyndham's remarks, delivered on the 8th of February, 1806, on which occasion that Gentleman said:—

> "Vast and extraordinary powers ought not to be delegated merely because some mischievous persons had been taken out, and that the persons to be entrusted with them were of a mild and moderate disposition. We ought to be most tender in granting vast and extraordinary powers with respect to Ireland; not only a power exercised at a distance from control and inspection, but also because there is an obligation of honour and consciousness to be delicate in granting power, the weight of which would fall exclusively on others, while it could not touch ourselves."

Now, it would be extremely desirable if these important words were attentively considered by the House, because if the present measure were adopted, the weight of the blow inflicted would fall on the unfortunate Irish people, who were already sufficiently sunk in misery and wretchedness. The noble Lord at the head of the Government had told the House of a sop he meant to give to Ireland in the shape of an extended franchise; but at the same time he, the noble Lord, thought that the Irish people had not made quite the use they ought of the franchise they already possessed. It was quite possible the noble Lord might be led to entertain this opinion, because at the last election, the Irish people had refused to return two of his officers. But why had not those officers been elected? Simply because they had refused to go with the popular voice, and that they preferred the interests of England to the demands of the Irish people; and therefore every right-minded man would approve of the use the Irish electors had made of their votes on that occasion; for they had vindicated what they conceived to be the interests of their country by voting according to the dictates of their conscience. He (Mr. J. O'Connell) would not enter upon the miserable game of recrimination, or institute a comparison between the mischiefs, the miseries, and the crimes which had been caused on both sides of the Channel; but if he were to do so, what hideous scenes might he not reveal of bribery in civilised England? Why, if reports were true, the election of the noble Lord himself for the city of London had not been conducted on very pure principles. The noble Lord had alluded to the Revolution of 1688, and seemed to think that, as the English people had then begun to prosper, the Irish people ought to have prospered likewise. But at the time England recovered a portion of her liberties, what did she do for Ireland? Why, she almost immediately after, by positive legislative enactment and Parliamentary interference, struck down with one blow the staple trade of Ireland—the woollen trade; and she did so professedly and declaredly, in the words of the address of that day in the House, because the woollen traders of England thought that that trade would interfere with the woollen trade of their own country. But did England stop there? No. She next passed the penal law system, which, besides interfering between man and man on the subject of religion, had the evil effect of disturbing the economic condition of the country, of preventing many from acquiring wealth, of crippling industry and enterprise, and of robbing Catholics of whatever property they happened to possess. How could the country be expected to prosper under circumstances such as these? In 1782, England being obliged to abandon her encroachments, Ireland started on a course of prosperity; and for the eighteen subsequent years, during which the Irish Parliament existed, that country, even according to the confession of some of the chief artificers of the Union, including Lord Castlereagh and the Earl of Clare, prospered more in wealth and general prosperity than any other country ever did in the same length of time. Then the Irish Parliament was taken away, and since that time England had been made the centre of attraction, Irish manufactures declined, and a refusal was given to interfere between Irish landlords and tenants, with the view of preventing the latter from being robbed. Could it be wondered at, then, that the Irish people had not become rich? But it was not even now too late to redress the grievances of that people. Let conciliation be tried, if it were only for the sake of novelty. Let the House be advised in time. Ireland was paralysed now. She was struck down to the earth; and therefore there was all the aggravation of wantonness in the present insult. He asked Her Majesty's Ministers to be true to their ancient principles, and he called upon the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth (Sir R. Peel) to look at the storm with which the political atmosphere was now surcharged, and to consider whether it was not desirable for England to have a firm and attached friend by her side, instead of a wretched and miserable slave. The hon. Member then moved—

> "That it be an instruction to the Committee to introduce such provisions into the Bill as shall guard and save intact the right of the subject to hold meetings, to petition for the enactment, repeal, or alteration of Acts of Parliament, or for redress of grievances, or other constitutional object, without other or further restriction of that right than existed under the operation of the Common and Statute Law of the Land, previous to the passing of the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act of last July."

The SOLICITOR GENERAL said, that it was not his intention to follow the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. J. O'Connell) throughout his very discursive speech. He would confine himself strictly to the resolution which the hon. Gentleman proposed as an instruction to the Committee, and he would endeavour in a very few words to show that that Amendment was totally inconsistent with the scope of the Bill, and would, if adopted, fail in advancing the end which the hon. Gentleman himself had in view. The House would observe, if it looked to what the object of the measure was, that the Bill before them was a Bill solely for the purpose of empowering the Lord Lieutenant, or the Chief Governor of Ireland, to apprehend and detain persons whom he should suspect of conspiring against the Government or the person of Her Majesty. Now, it was possible that there might be many acts apparently of an extremely innocent nature in themselves, but which, coupled with other acts, and viewed in respect to information which might be in possession of the Lord Lieutenant, might constitute proofs that the persons who had committed these apparently innocent acts had really been conspiring against the Government or the person of the Queen. But how was a Bill providing for such cases to prevent, or act as a curb upon, legitimate public meetings held for legitimate purposes. In the case of a public meeting held for legitimate and proper purposes, that meeting would be as lawful under the Bill now before them, as it would have been before any Bill of the kind had been introduced, and as it would after the present Bill would have ceased to exist. In point of fact, they might just as well enumerate, in such an Amendment as that now proposed, any other species of acts which, by themselves, were perfectly legal and innocent, as public meetings. They might just as well propose an amendment declaring that no man should be legally interrupted and imprisoned for receiving his friends in his own house. Such an Act might be perfectly proper, nay, highly commendable in itself; but, yet, viewed in connexion with other circumstances, and in connexion with information in possession of the Lord Lieutenant, it might amount to a meeting held in order to conspire illegally against the person or the Government of Her Majesty. It would, therefore, be a stultification of Parliament to provide that this Bill should not interfere with or be applied, under any circumstances, to public meetings. It might be the opinion of the hon. Gentleman, that in Ireland it was impossible to hold a public meeting for political purposes, without giving an opportunity to some ill-disposed persons of carrying the proceedings of the meeting further than its originators wished or intended. On that point he would give no opinion; but if such were the case, it was clear that such a meeting was one which ought to be prohibited, although the right of holding it was not affected by the Bill before them. There was, in fact, in this Bill nothing whatever to prevent any gentlemen from holding a public meeting, if they thought it could be conducted in such a manner as to make it one proper and desirable to be held. In a Bill of this description they must leave a considerable amount of discretion in the hands of the person in whom the administration of the measure was to be vested. But in the present state of society, and in the face of the knowledge so easily obtained by everybody of what took place in all parts of the empire, he thought that they had a reasonable security that no improper results could take place from putting in force the powers of the Bill against those who had done anything to deserve it. The proof that such was likely to be the case was, that no complaint had been made of any undue severity under the Bill of which the present was a continuation. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Limerick admitted that not a single member of the Repeal Association had been arrested under the present Bill. Was not this a strong proof, both that the members of the Association had no reason to complain of the Bill, and that the Lord Lieutenant had not considered that they entertained any treasonable motives? He thought that the House might, therefore, safely leave to the Lord Lieutenant a discretion in applying the provisions of this Bill. It was a measure which had this advantage over every other Coercion Bill—that whereas other measures of the class involved very considerable evils and inconveniences to persons purely innocent, this Bill, the provisions of which were to be applied only upon good information and good grounds by the Lord Lieutenant, could only affect persons who were either really guilty, or so culpably indiscreet as reasonably to give rise to a belief that they were engaged in conspiring against Her Majesty or Her Government. No Bill could have been more efficacious than that which it was now proposed to continue; and, he might add, the manner in which Parliament had passed that Bill had done much to prevent the insurrection from being more serious than it was. He hoped, therefore, that the House would not consent to cripple the present measure by introducing a provision which would make it impossible to carry the Bill into effect. The Lord Lieutenant believed that without this measure he could not, with safety, carry on the government of Ireland. Under these circumstances he (the Solicitor General) hoped the House would reject the Amendment, and pass the Bill in its integrity as speedily as possible.

Mr. E. B. ROCHE said, that the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Solicitor General had only tended the more strongly to convince him of the undesirableness—to use the mildest term—of this measure. What a difference of opinion there appeared to exist in the minds of Her Majesty's Government, as to the intention of this measure! They had the noble Lord at the head of the Government and the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland saying that this Bill was intended for one purpose; and they had the right hon. Baronet the Secretary for Ireland and the Solicitor General saying that it was intended for another purpose. Now, the right hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down had distinctly stated that this Bill was not intended to put down political agitation; but the Lord Lieutenant, in the letter which he had recently written to the right hon. Baronet at the head of the Home Office (Sir G. Grey) had as distinctly stated that he applied to Parliament to be armed with the powers which this Bill would confer, for the purpose of putting down all kinds of political agitation, which he declared to be the bane of Ireland. His hon. Friend the Member for Limerick (Mr. J. O'Connell) was, therefore, quite right in asserting that the noble Lord at the head of the Government (Lord J. Russell) and the right hon, Baronet the Secretary for Ireland (Sir W. Somerville) were totally at variance in their declarations as to the object and effects of this measure. He (Mr. Roche) did not intend, after the repeated occasions on which he had already addressed the House on this subject, to weary them by going over the same ground; but he could not sit down without protesting in the strongest manner that man could protest, in the name of his constituency, and, indeed, of the entire Irish people, against this unnecessary and unjustifiable attack upon their constitutional rights.

Colonel RAWDON said, the object of the Bill was to put down treason and treasonable practices in Ireland, and that if he thought any portion of it would obstruct the free right of discussion for the repeal of an Act of Parliament, no one would more readily vote against it than he would himself. But he (Colonel Rawdon) took a very different view of its provisions, and believed that neither the noble Lord at the head of the Government, nor the right hon. Baronet the Chief Secretary for Ireland, would have placed their names to a Bill of this description, unless they felt the heavy responsibility which would attach to the Government if a measure of the kind were not introduced. They conceived it essentially necessary for the prosperity and tranquillity of Ireland. He believed the Act was considered to have more the character of a protective Act. He understood that during the time of the violent meetings in Ireland, a father had gone to the authorities with his misguided son and said, "Take this young man, and keep him from taking part in the insurrectionary movement." He believed that in these days of newspaper power and free discussion, there was nothing whatever to dread from any abuse of the power which now, for the second time, was about to be entrusted to the Lord Lieutenant. He had stated, both in and out of that House, that his great objection to the measure of the right hon. Baronet (Sir R. Peel) was, that it was injudicious and vexatious, and that he would have preferred a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act as infinitely more efficient and less vexatious. Believing that tranquillity was essential to Ireland, that no right of discussion would be affected by the Bill, and that the powers conferred by it would be wisely and humanely exercised, he should give his vote in favour of the Bill in all its future stages.

Mr. REYNOLDS said, that as there seemed to be some misconception with respect to the provisions of this Bill, he would read to the House the first three or four lines of it, which bore upon the powers to be conferred upon the Lord Lieutenant. The Bill stated—

> "Whereas an Act was passed in the last Session of Parliament, intituled 'An Act to enable the Lord Lieutenant, or other Chief Governor, or Governors, of Ireland, to detain until the 1st day of March, 1849, such persons as he or they may suspect of conspiring against Her Majesty's person."

Now, it appeared to him (Mr. Reynolds), that, according to the explanation of the Bill given by the right hon. Gentleman the Solicitor General, the Lord Lieutenant was to be the sole judge of the party who ought to be arrested. It seemed clear to him that the Lord Lieutenant would have full power to interpret the law, and to "suspect," as he might please, any person whom he might find troublesome. He (Mr. Reynolds) concurred in the opinion offered in a recent debate, and repeated during the present discussion, that the Lord Lieutenant had not abused the powers entrusted to him, but that he had administered them with great temper, judgment, and mercy. But entertaining that opinion, he (Mr. Reynolds) still objected to the extension of these powers to the Lord Lieutenant, because he was not prepared to place the liberties of the subject on so slender a footing as the opinion of any peer or commoner in the realm. To say that the Lord Lieutenant had not in any instance abused the power in his hands, was but begging the question. Was it not saying to the House that they ought not to hesitate to suspend the constitution, because the power was in safe hands? It should not be forgotten, that if the Bill were passed in its present shape, it would be impossible to hold any meeting for the purpose of petitioning Parliament for the redress of grievances, because the terror of arrest would act on the minds of the people to such an extent as to prevent them assembling. It was said that political agitation was a great evil. He admitted it to be an evil, if carried to an unconstitutional extent; but it was the reverse of evil when carried on peaceably and constitutionally. He was of opinion that the privilege of political agitation had conferred great and substantial benefits, not only on Ireland, but on England. If the free-traders had been told that a perseverance in their agitation for corn-law repeal would cause a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, they would not have succeeded. Now, suppose he (Mr. Reynolds) was desirous to agitate for a repeal of the Union—a measure which, while it would confer a benefit on Ireland, would not do an injury to England—or for any other measure—suppose, as he had said the other night, the Irish people should take it into their heads to agitate for the abolition of the temporalities of the Protestant Church, would they be threatened with this Act? Formerly a man who refused to pay tithes was called a traitor. It was called treason to refuse to pay tithes; but tithes were abolished, in name, although not in fact. With respect to that question, he might say, that agitation had ended in making the Irish Protestant Church richer, and poor Catholic people poorer. He had heard an allusion the other night to the Appropriation Clause, and one hon. Gentleman had stated that that question was dead. He had great doubts of that. That question might be entombed, but the inscription on the tablet was "*Resurgam.*" That question would be revived, but not on such narrow limits as the Appropriation Clause. When that question should be revived, he believed the Irish people would declare that the temporalities of the Protestant Church were an infliction which could not be borne. He believed that the people would demand that 1,000,000*l.* annually should no longer be applied to the exclusive support of the clergy of a small section of the Irish people, but should be devoted to the purposes of the Irish nation. What, he asked, was the meaning of forcing this Protestant Church upon Catholic Ireland? Why not apply the same principle to Ireland that you did to England and Scotland? [An Hon. MEMBER: Scotland had to fight for it.] Yes, Scotland had fought for that principle, and it was worth fighting for. Ireland's altars were not free. The Protestant Church in England was the Established Church, because the Episcopalians were in the majority; the Presbyterian Church was the Church of Scotland, because the Presbyterians were in the majority; but the Protestant Church in Ireland was the Established Church, because the Protestant Episcopalians were in a great minority. Here was a contradiction with a vengeance. The Irish people were sick of being slaves; they felt degraded; and they would feel degradation so long as the present system was continued. The people of Ireland, he could assure the House, were not apathetic on this question. The people of Ireland had thought that by repealing the Union, they would repeal the present Church Establishment. But now the people were told, that they would not be allowed to agitate. If they were not allowed to agitate, he called upon the House to do something for them. Let them get rid of the temporalities of the Irish Church, and let them fully emancipate the people. With respect to the measure before the House, he was sorry that the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. J. O'Connell) proposed to persevere in his Amendment. If that hon. Member persevered, he (Mr. Reynolds) should vote with him; but he objected to the Amendment, as it had the appearance of compromising a great principle. It was as much as to say to the House, "If you will agree to the Amendment, I will agree to the Bill." [Mr. J. O'CONNELL: No, no!] He thought the Amendment must bear that construction. But, returning to the Bill itself, he must call it an unnecessary, an uncalled-for, and an unprecedented invasion of the rights of the subject. He begged the House to consider what the state of Ireland was at the present moment. Ireland was tranquil. It was admitted that the people were tired of agitation. [The O'GORMAN MAHON: Hear, hear!] He understood the meaning of the cheer of the hon. Member for Ennis. The people were not tired in the sense which he meant; they were looking for some substantial relief. Tranquillity, he repeated, reigned in Ireland. Some of the most troublesome of the political opponents of the Government had been transported, and others had passed upon them the sentence dictated by the brutal Act of Edward III., which directed that the offenders should be drawn and quartered, and their bodies be disposed of according to the pleasure of Her Majesty. He hoped that such a savage sentence would never be carried into effect on any subject of the Crown. But the Government had even a better guarantee for tranquillity than the convictions they had obtained. They had 30,000 or 40,000 troops in Ireland, and 11,000 police—thirty or forty of whom, by the by, had gained the great battle of Waterloo at Ballingarry. And yet, in the midst of all this tranquillity, it was proposed to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act. He believed that he was as well acquainted with the feelings of his fellow-countrymen as most Gentlemen were; and he had no hesitation in assuring the House that they need be under no apprehension of any danger to the public peace. What the people required was relief; they had discharged from their minds all notions of fighting. The raw material of disaffection had disappeared. It was notorious that nineteen out of twenty of the disturbances which had occurred in Ireland, had grown out of competition for land. But agrarian outrage had disappeared altogether; the poor-law and the famine had destroyed that, and land was now no longer a bone of contention. The people were expatriating themselves. They would not take land now for which a few years ago they would have shot their landlords, if they had attempted to disturb them in the possession of it. As to the measure before the House, he regretted that the Government, whom he recognised as the old and tried friends of civil and religious liberty, should have brought it forward. He should not have addressed the House had he not wished to urge upon the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. J. O'Connell) the impolicy of placing his opposition to the measure on such narrow grounds, and to recommend him to give his opposition to the entire proposals of the Government.

MR. ANSTEY also rose to appeal to the hon. and learned Member for Limerick (Mr. J. O'Connell) not to press his Amendment to a division, as it seemed to him it would be impossible for the House to come to a satisfactory vote upon it. He thought the Amendment took more the shape of a question to be moved in Committee than any other. In the Committee, the Act might be amended so as not to press upon persons engaged in the agitation for the repeal of the Union. Now, if that was a treasonable agitation, the matter was ended; if it was not, then the proposed measure did not bring it within its scope. Under all the circumstances it appeared impossible for him to hesitate as to the vote which he should be obliged to give. In one point of view the Amendment was unnecessary, in another pernicious. He should, therefore, oppose the Amendment.

MR. J. O'CONNELL rose to explain. He wished to know whether he rightly understood the hon. Member the Solicitor General to state that the letter of the Lord Lieutenant and the commentary of the Irish Secretary, in both of which it was said the powers of the Bill were to be used against an agitation described by the one as for an object that could not be attained, and by the other as for an impracticable purpose, did not refer to the agitation for the repeal of the Union?

SIR G. GREY said, neither the letter of the Lord Lieutenant nor the speech of the Chief Secretary for Ireland could be supposed to have the force of law. He was quite willing to concur in the opinion expressed by his hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General, and the hon. and learned Member opposite (Mr. Anstey). He thought the hon. and learned Member (Mr. J. O'Connell), who proposed the Amendment, would act wisely in attending to the suggestions which had been thrown out.

MR. J. O'CONNELL then withdrew his Motion, intimating that its substance might be embodied in a clause in Committee.

The question was then put that the House should go into Committee.

MR. J. O'CONNELL moved a negative, and the House divided on the question, that Mr. Speaker do now leave the chair:—Ayes 84; Noes 14: Majority 70.

List of the AYES.

Abdy, T. N.
Adair, R. A. S.
Anderson, A.
Armstrong, Sir A.
Armstrong, R. B.
Baines, M. T.
Bellew, R. M.
Bernal, R.
Bernard, Visct.
Boyle, hon. Col.
Bremridge, R.
Brisco, M.
Brotherton, J.
Brown, W.
Butler, P. S.
Clements, hon. C. S.
Craig, W. G.
Crowder, R. B.
Cubitt, W.
Drumlanrig, Visct.
Duncuft, J.
Dundas, Sir D.
Ebrington, Visct.
Ellis, J.
Ferguson, Sir R. A.
Fordyce, A. D.
Gaskell, J. M.
Grace, O. D. J.
Graham, rt. hon. Sir J.
Granby, Marq. of
Granger, T. C.
Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.
Gwyn, H.
Harcourt, G. G.

Harris, R.
Hastie, A.
Heathcote, G. J.
Henry, A.
Herries, rt. hon. J. C.
Heyworth, L.
Hood, Sir A.
Hotham, Lord
Howard, Lord E.
Hume, J.
Kershaw, J.
Labouchere, rt. hon. H.
Lacy, H. C.
Lascelles, hon. W. S.
Lemon, Sir C.
Lewis, G. C.
Lockhart, A. E.
Macnamara, Maj.
Mahon, The O'Gorman
Maitland, T.
Mandeville, Visct.
Masterman, J.
Maule, rt. hon. F.
Milner, W. M. E.
Moody, C. A.
Morison, Sir W.
Napier, J.
Nugent, Lord
Owen, Sir J.
Pigott, F.
Raphael, A.
Rawdon, Col.
Rice, E. R.
Rich, H.
Romilly, Sir J.
Russell, Lord J.
Scrope, G. P.
Sheil, rt. hon. R. L.
Somerville, rt. hn. Sir W.
Spooner, R.
Stafford, A.
Strickland, Sir G.
Stuart, Lord D.
Thompson, Col.
Thornhill, G.
Villiers, hon. C.
Walter, J.
Willyams, H.
Wilson, M.
Wood, rt. hon. Sir C.

TELLERS.
Tufnell, H.
Hill, Lord M.

List of the NOES.

Anstey, T. C.
Fagan, W.
Grattan, H.
Greene, J.
Meagher, T.
Morgan, H. K. G.
O'Brien, J.
O'Brien, T.
O'Connor, F.
O'Flaherty, A.
Power, N.
Reynolds, J.
Scully, F.
Sullivan, M.
Williams, J.

TELLERS.
O'Connell, J.
Roche, E. B.

House in Committee; Mr. Bernal in the chair.

On Clause 1 (Persons imprisoned in Ireland for high treason, &c. may be detained) being proposed,

Mr. ANSTEY rose to propose, pursuant to notice, several Amendments of which he had given notice. In moving these Amendments, he avowed himself opposed totally to the principle of the present Bill; but as the House had affirmed that principle, he conceived that the Bill would be modified and improved considerably by carrying out his suggestion. He would propose the very reverse of what the Bill contemplated, and would only give the extraordinary powers which it invested in the hands of the Lord Lieutenant to a Committee of the Privy Council. It appeared to him strange that so many hon. Members on both sides of the House should feel so apathetic about a measure which went so much to infringe upon one of the oldest and most important principles of the constitution. He concluded by announcing his intention of dividing the House on the first of his Amendments; and if it should be lost, he would not divide upon the others. He would move to leave out the words "is, are, or."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL said, he was sorry he could not accede to the hon. and learned Member's Amendment. The hon. and learned Gentleman had said he wished now to take the sense of the Committee not merely upon the technical alteration of the words embraced in his first Amendment, but practically upon the broader question as to the effect of the whole of his Amendments generally. But when the Committee contrasted for a moment the real effect of the hon. and learned Gentleman's Amendments, with the title of the Bill itself, which they had just affirmed by so large a majority, they would see at once that when they had voted the second reading of the Bill, they had virtually decided upon negativing these Amendments. For what was the object of these Amendments? Why, the hon. and learned Gentleman proposed to omit the whole of the 2nd clause of a Bill consisting of but three clauses. He proposed to strike out the power now given to the Lord Lieutenant and the Government to apprehend persons suspected of treasonable practices, and only gave authority to proclaim them. The Bill was brought in for the purpose of continuing the Act of last Session, whereas the hon. and learned Gentleman did not wish to do that, but to introduce an entirely new Act for a different object. His (the Attorney General's) answer to this was—he admitted that the powers demanded by the Government were very large, and granted that they might be abused, although he hoped the House had confidence in the Government, and believed that it would not not abuse its powers. If they were abused, however, the Government would still be open to responsibility and inquiry quite as much if the Bill were passed as it now stood, as they would be if it were altered in the mode which the hon. and learned Gentleman suggested. But his (the Attorney General's) further answer was this—that in dealing with large powers of this doubtful nature, it was far better to follow the old established form; and when Bills like this were renewed, so far as his recollection extended, it was always done *ipsissimis verbis*, according to precedent. It was always far safer to follow the old form, than open a door to what was not understood, and the effect of which could not be controlled by previous practice. For these reasons he must resist the Amendments.

The Committee divided on Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause:"—Ayes 79; Noes 12: Majority 67.

List of the Noes.

Fagan, W.
Greene, J.
Meagher, T.
Morgan, H. K. G.
O'Brien, T.
O'Connor, F.
O'Flaherty, A.
Reynolds, J.
Roche, E. B.
Scully, F.
Sullivan, M.
Williams, J.

TELLERS.

Anstey, T. C.
O'Connell, J.

The remaining Amendments proposed by Mr. Anstey were then severally rejected without a division; as was also an Amendment moved by Lord Nugent, to limit the continuation of the powers of the Act to the 1st of June next, instead of to the 1st day of September next.

Clause 1 was then agreed to.

On Clause 2,

Mr. ANSTEY moved the omission of the clause. He thought it would be unreasonable and unjust to confer on the Lord Lieutenant the power of selecting any place he might please as a gaol for carrying out the object of the Act; because a person might by that means be removed to a part of the country where he would have no opportunity of entering into communication with his friends, or of preparing his defence.

The Motion of the hon. and learned Gentleman was negatived without a division, and the clause was agreed to.

Clause 3 having next been agreed to,

Mr. J. O'CONNELL wished to bring up some additional clauses. The first clause he would move was to the effect—

> "Provided always, and be it enacted, That nothing in this Act contained shall be construed or taken to warrant the arrest, committal, or detainer of any person procuring, or seeking to procure, in a legal and constitutional manner, the holding of meetings to petition Parliament, or to address the Queen, in accordance with the law and constitution, or of any person attending or taking part in the proceedings of such meetings."

His object in wishing to introduce these words into the Bill, was to protect the liberty of the subject in holding meetings of a peaceful and constitutional character. He, of course, did not admit that the Association with which he was individually connected was guilty of treasonable practices—at the same time the Act was left in a very dangerous—because very ambiguous and equivocal—state. They had already had four different Members of the Government all contradicting each other as to the object and intention of the Act; and it was not safe to pass a measure that gave rise to such contrariety of opinions amongst its principal promoters. He wanted it defined by positive words, that the right in question should not be interfered with when only exercised in a legitimate and legal manner, and must, therefore, divide the Committee upon the clause he had just read.

Sir GEORGE GREY hoped the hon. and learned Member for Limerick would see the propriety of withdrawing his Motion. He (Mr. J. O'Connell) had already occupied a considerable portion of time in laying before the House the grounds for the instruction which he wished to be given to the Committee, and which instruction was substantially the same as the words of the present Amendment. The discussion upon that instruction had altogether occupied the House about two hours, and the opinion of hon. Members had been so generally expressed against it that the hon. Gentleman had been prevailed upon to withdraw it. He (Sir G. Grey) thought the hon. and learned Member ought to be satisfied with the clear explanations of the hon. and learned Member for Youghal (Mr. Anstey), and the equally clear argument of his (Sir G. Grey's) hon. and learned Friend (the Solicitor General) near him. They had convincingly shown that the instruction could not be entertained, and the same remark equally applied to the present Motion, which was practically the same as the instruction that had been withdrawn.

Mr. J. O'CONNELL was proceeding to reply, when

The CHAIRMAN interrupted him, and said, a question arose upon a matter of form, as to whether the Motion could come within the scope of the title of the Bill.

Mr. J. O'CONNELL said, if the right hon. Baronet (Sir G. Grey) could answer one question fairly, he would withdraw his Motion. Was it intended by this Bill to interfere to prevent the subject in Ireland from agitating for the repeal of an Act of Parliament—that Act being the Act of Union?

Sir G. GREY said, the Lord Lieutenant would adopt such a course, in carrying out the powers of the Act, as he thought proper; but he would assure the hon. and learned Gentleman that neither his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, nor any other Member of the Government, would promise or hold out an immunity to any person bringing himself within the suspicion of entertaining treasonable designs.

After a few words from Mr. HUME,

Mr. O'CONNELL said he must persist in taking the sense of the Committee upon his proposition.

Mr. B. OSBORNE recommended the hon. and learned Member for Limerick not to press for a division. It was impossible to make the Bill any better; and if he (Mr. J. O'Connell) was so anxious to get a practical answer from the Minister as to what course he should take with respect to the Repeal Association, it was very easy for him to do so. He (Mr. J. O'Connell) had only to go over to Ireland and begin again to agitate, and he would then soon find out the truth.

The Committee divided on Question, "That the said clause be now brought up:"—Ayes 11; Noes 105: Majority 94.

List of the Ayes.

Fagan, W.
Grattan, H.
Greene, J.
Meagher, T.
O'Brien, T.
O'Flaherty, A.
Reynolds, J.
Roche, E. B.
Scully, F.
Sullivan, M.
Williams, J.

TELLERS.
O'Connell, J.
O'Connor, F.

List of the Noes.

Adair, R. A. S.
Arbuthnott, hon. H.
Armstrong, Sir A.
Armstrong, R. B.
Arundel and Surrey, Earl of
Baines, M. T.
Bass, T.
Bellew, R. M.
Bernard, Visct.
Birch, Sir T. B.
Blakemore, R.
Boyle, hon. Col.
Brisco, M.
Brotherton, J.
Brown, W.
Carter, J. B.
Clements, hon. C. S.
Craig, W. G.
Crowder, R. B.
Cubitt, W.
Disraeli, B.
Drumlanrig, Visct.
Drummond, H.
Duncuft, J.
Dundas, Sir D.
Ellis, J.
Estcourt, J. B. B.
Ferguson, Sir R. A.
FitzPatrick, rt. hn. J. W.
Fordyce, A. D.
Forster, M.
Fuller, A. E.
Gooch, E. S.
Gore, W. O.
Graham, rt. hon. Sir J.
Granby, Marq. of
Granger, T. C.
Grenfell, C. P.
Grenfell, C. W.
Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.
Gwyn, H.
Harcourt, G. G.
Harris, R.
Hastie, A.
Hawes, B.
Hay, Lord J.
Heathcoat, J.
Heathcote, G. J.
Henry, A.
Herries, rt. hon. J. C.
Heyworth, L.
Hobhouse, rt. hon. Sir J.
Hobhouse, T. B.
Hodges, T. L.
Hood, Sir A.
Hotham, Lord
Howard, Lord E.
Hume, J.
Humphery, Ald.
Jervis, Sir J.
Labouchere, rt. hon. H.
Lemon, Sir C.
Lewis, G. C.
Lincoln, Earl of
Macnamara, Maj.
Maitland, T.
Mandeville, Visct.
Martin, C. W.
Masterman, J.
Maule, rt. hon. F.
Miles, W.
Milner, W. M. E.
Mulgrave, Earl of
O'Brien, Sir L.
Owen, Sir J.
Parker, J.
Perfect, R.
Power, N.
Prime, R.
Raphael, A.
Rawdon, Col.
Rice, E. R.
Rich, H.
Romilly, Sir J.
Russell, Lord J.
Russell, F. C. H.
St. George, C.
Scrope, G. P.
Seymour, Lord
Sheil, rt. hon. R. L.
Sheridan, R. B.
Slaney, R. A.
Smith, rt. hon. R. V.
Somerville, rt. hn. Sir W.
Spooner, R.
Stafford, A.
Stephenson, R.
Thompson, Col.
Thornely, T.
Villiers, hon. C.
Walpole, S. H.
Walsh, Sir J. B.
Ward, H. G.
Wilson, M.
Wood, rt. hon. Sir C.

TELLERS.
Tufnell, H.
Hill, Lord M.

The Bill reported: the House resumed.

RELIEF OF DISTRESS (IRELAND)—(ADJOURNED DEBATE).

The House having gone into Committee,

Mr. P. SCROPE said, that it was not his intention to press the Amendment which stood in his name on the present occasion. He would not take upon himself the responsibility of opposing a vote which he believed to be absolutely necessary, and the object of which was to prevent the starvation of numbers of the Irish people. If any proposition to that effect was made, he hoped the Committee would not listen to it. But supposing that the Committee would agree to the vote, he would only attach one condition to it. It was now understood in Ireland that the poor had a right to relief in the extremity of destitution. And if the Committee came to a vote which should have the effect of doing away with that right, it would not only incur the heaviest of responsibilities, but would give a license to plunder to those in whose behalf that right had been proclaimed. The refusal of relief had gone to a lamentable extent. The vice-guardians of Ballina and Westport had declared that they refused relief in a great many cases in which, in their opinion, relief was necessary. That was incurring a dangerous responsibility on their part, but if they had not sufficient funds in hand he did not know what they could do. Now, if they under such circumstances refused this vote, or if they declared to those starving paupers who had been once admitted to relief as a right that they would have it no longer, they would render themselves liable to all the fatal consequences that might ensue. He would, therefore, on a future occasion, endeavour to persuade the House to agree to this condition—

that the money voted should not be a grant, but a loan, which he believed would afford security against its being improperly administered, and also against the continuance of future applications. If voted as a grant, it would encourage future applications and the non-payment of the poor-rates.

Mr. GRATTAN then rose to move the Amendment of which he had given notice:—

> "On Motion for Relief of Distress (Ireland), to insert after the word 'that' the words 'the Collectors of Excise in Ireland be henceforth directed, and do in future pay into the office of Vice-Treasurer in Dublin the amount of all Crown and quit-rents, and that the same be appropriated to the Relief of distressed Poor Law Unions in that Country.'"

He complained of the attacks that had been made upon the people of Ireland, and assured the House that he, for one, did not come there to beg; and he believed if the people of that country were but fairly treated, they would do without assistance from England. These were the premises he would lay down, and it would be for hon. Members to say whether he made out his case or not. There was quite enough of money in Ireland to support the people if they would only leave it there. There were such items as "Paid to Queen Victoria, 10 gs.; paid to Queen Victoria, 20 gs.; paid to Queen Victoria, 50 gs.; and so on; and these vouchers were lying in Dublin in the bank. Let that money not be taken out of the country, and there would be no necessity for their coming to England to ask relief. The objection of hon. Members in that House was that English money should be devoted to Irish purposes; but here was a case of Irish money lying there which there could be no objection to devote to Irish purposes. When the adventurers, as they were called, the drummers and fifers of Cromwell, came over to Ireland, and the London companies, they had large tracts of land divided amongst them, for which they had paid merely a small sum of 1*d.* or 1½*d.* per acre, by way of quit-rent; that money amounted to about 70,000*l.* annually; and although it had been somowhat reduced of late, it still averaged 55,000*l.* per annum. Now let them come to a proper understanding, and when hon. Members talked of their coming to England to ask for money, let them first refund the money which belonged to Ireland. Let them only leave the money there instead of carrying off these Crown-rents and quit-rents to decorate Carlton House at one time, and St. James's Palace at another. There could be neither justice, nor propriety, nor good sense in acting thus, and then saying that the Irish came to that House as mendicants. He did not think the hon. Member for Tavistock (Mr. Trelawny), was justified in sneering in that way at the Irish Members and the Irish people. If the Irish landlords only did their duty, there would be no necessity for their coming to that House to ask for assistance. But, independently of this, there were the rents of the great absentees, which were drawn from his country and spent in this. He had a list of them, and he would give their names. There were the Duke of Devonshire and the Duke of Buckingham. He, to be sure, was sold out. His property amounted to about 400,000*l.* Mr. White, formerly a Member of that House, bought three townlands for 25,000*l.* He knew that they were afterwards set up for sale, and sold for 14,500*l.* The *Times*, and *Morning Post*, and *Morning Herald* had been abusing the Irish Members and the Irish people, and had set the lower against the upper owners. They had taunted and insulted them. They would defend themselves, and show that the mischief of Ireland arose from the absentees. They might be excellent men, but they were bad landholders—they might be very good Englishmen, but they were bad Irish proprietors. There were the Marquess of Hertford and the Duke of Bedford. The Duke of Bedford was a very good man, but he had a poor tenantry—Irish tenantry. There was the Marquess of Conyngham, who said that he had not the means of improving his property. Where were all his means spent? In this country. There were the Marquess of Lansdowne, the Marquess of Anglesea, the Marquess of Donegal, and the Marquess of Bath. The tenantry of the latter were in a wretched condition; the property was quite bare—wood or tree scarcely to be seen on any part of it. Then came the Marquess of Ely and Earl Fitzwilliam, a most excellent man. There were Lords Essex, Audley, Maryborough, Middleton, Albemarle, Clifton, Ashbrook, Arden, Stafford, Lifford, Templemore, Colonel Wyndham, and Mr. Sidney Herbert. All of these might be excellent individuals, but they resided out of the country; and any person who knew the value of a resident gentry could from this circumstance account for the misery of Ireland. Mr. Greville, Mr. Lane Fox, and Mr. Ormsby Gore had also large properties in Ireland. He suggested that the best thing they could do would be to impose a tax of 10 per cent upon the absentee landlords; if they did that the people of Ireland would willingly dispense with their 50,000*l.* Hon. Members said they would grant it because it would be the last. He said, "No"—it was only the beginning of a series. If they were to be thus treated as mendicants, it would be better for them at once to take off their clothes, and come to that House in the old garments that had been sent to Ireland. He had already mentioned one fund, and he would now mention another. He would go back to the petition of right, when the poor Catholics were duped after granting 130,000*l.* to King Charles. But that was not all. In 1782 the Irish Parliament gave 20,000*l.* to support 20,000 seamen, which they voted for the protection of England. That was not all. When the late Earl Fitzwilliam was sent to Ireland, the Catholics were promised their rights, and, on the faith of that Parliament, voted 250,000*l.* The money was paid; but the moment it was paid the compact was broken. The letters of the Earl of Carlisle and Lord Fitzwilliam proved that. Here there were 130,000*l.*, 20,000*l.*, and 250,000*l.*, making altogether 400,000*l.*, which had been given to this country by the people of Ireland. He would take the absentee rents drawn from Ireland at 3,000,000*l.*, though he believed it was nearer four millions. This drain existed for the last fifty years, which made a total of 150,000,000*l.* He defied the ablest arithmetician to say that these figures were wrong. Take the Crown rents at an average of 70,000*l.* for fifty years, and that would make 4,200,000*l.*, so that instead of coming as beggars to that House, he would take the liberty of telling the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he would find it difficult to contravene the fact, that there was altogether a sum of 158,000,000*l.* sterling taken out of Ireland during the last fifty years. He trusted that the hon. Member for Tavistock (Mr. Trelawny), now that he had heard these facts, would blush for shame for the attacks he had made upon the Irish people. He thought the hon. Member was altogether unjustified in the charges he had brought against them; he should be glad to know whether the hon. Gentleman really thought that the people of Ireland had swindled the country. He cared little for their 50,000*l.* that was to be voted that night, because he could tell them that 50,000*l.* would not do, nor five times 50,000*l.* He thought it better to speak out and be honest at once. He had never been insensible to the kindness of England; but when he heard so much talk of the British Association, and the large sums subscribed by the people of England, he would first remind them that the whole amount did not exceed 600,000*l.*, and that if the names of the subscribers were looked over, it would be found that a great portion of them were persons who were connected by property or relationship with Ireland. He admitted, however, the kindness and the liberality of England in the season of Ireland's distress; but they had heard quite enough of it from the hon. Member for Tavistock, and he would say to him—

> "To John I owe some obligation,
> But John hath lately thought it fit
> To publish it to all the nation,
> So John and I are more than quit."

And he believed, if the accounts were fairly balanced between the two countries, Ireland would be found to owe England nothing. In reality the debt and the obligation lay the other way—not money merely, but empire; for let the people of England bear in mind who it was that really wished to separate Ireland from England. It was one of their own countrymen—not one of the mere gentry, but one of the nobility, a high and titled bishop—the Bishop of Derry—who rode in at the head of 5,000 followers, and said to the Earl of Charlemont, "Now is the time for us to slip the connexion—let us have blood, and blood enough." "No," said Lord Charlemont, "there shall be no bloodshed if I can help it," for his Lordship was attached to the connexion with England, and he, with other Irishmen, united together in opposition to such a proceeding. What was the use of this grant? Why, this 50,000*l.* would not last the Irish any time. Twopence out of every 1*s.* of it would only go to feed the poor, and the 10*d.* would be divided amongst the officers and staff. There were 131 unions in Ireland, and it appeared that there were 50 more to be added. Did they really think that this would remedy the evil? Why they built the most ridiculous teetotum poor-houses that could be conceived, which cost 5,000*l.* to 8,000*l.* and 12,000*l.* They gave the paupers gardens too, and so very generous were they in their attentions to them, that they gave them for their odours sweet peas and mignionette. There was a ridicule accompanying this extravagance that was quite disgusting. In the union to which he belonged, one of the guardians, who had nothing else to do, pushed his stick through the wall of the workhouse, it was so very ill-constructed. In the Celbridge union, they had kept down the rate by voluntary assessment. In consequence of its having the advantage of a better resident gentry than other parts of the country possessed, they were able to get rid of the Government officers, and to support the poor themselves. They owed the Government a small sum of 30*l.*, which he would be willing to pay them back; for he did not want their money. He held in his hand a book, called "The Irish Crisis," which he was informed was published and circulated at the expense of Government. A former hon. Member for Sligo had once accused him (Mr. Grattan) almost of treason, because he had attended a meeting where there was a banner on which was represented a harp without a crown. Now, he found that this book had got upon the cover the harp without the crown. Merely such a thing as this might be made evidence against some of the unfortunate Irish who were charged with high treason. He had purchased this book before the Act was passed for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus; for if he had bought it now, it was possible he would be arrested under this Act and thrown into prison. This book, however, was written by an Englishman high in favour with the Government. It commenced and ended with mis-statement. It depicted the poverty of the Irish, and reproached them for their poverty. It libelled the people of Ireland for being poor, told them that they were slaves, and informed them that they were never fitted to take part in such proceedings as those of '82. What did the writer get for that publication? If he (Mr. Grattan) had come to the door of the House a poor, creeping creature, demanding charity, he would have been offered a farthing; but here was an English gentleman who had been made a knight, and rewarded by a vote of 2,000*l.* for writing a book which added insult to injury as regarded the Irish nation. He believed Lord Clarendon to be an honest man; but, at the same time, he thought he was very ill-advised. The Habeas Corpus Suspension Act was not wanted in Ireland, but it was necessary in order to keep their eyes and their ears closed until the revolution was completed. There was now a gradual change of property in progress. Their policy was, first to vilify the Irish people, to call them barbarians — their priesthood, surpliced ruffians—their landlords, tyrants, exterminators; and these same landlords they were now endeavouring to sweep down in one general mass of ruin. It happened that a friend of his, an individual in this town, had lent 50,000*l.* in Ireland against his (Mr. Grattan's) advice, and he had never been able since to obtain any interest for his money. He did not wonder at the disrelish of the English to speculate in that country; for who would leave his soft downy bed in London to sit upon a naked rock in Connemara? He was not a leader nor exterminator; he liked the aristocracy; he preferred the coach-and-six to the miserable one-horse chaise. If they gave the Irish freedom, they would support them in war or peace; but if they gave them chains and slavery, they would hate them, and they would get rid of them when they could. Now, there was nothing like speaking the truth. The Irish would act as the English themselves would act under similar circumstances—as the Norman barons at Runnymede acted—as their ancestors had acted in the time of Charles I., and in the time of James II.; they would stand up for the civil and religious liberties of their country. They ought to tax the absentees, if they would not send them back to Ireland. The time would come when they would regret not having done so. Let them not pride themselves, in their vain glory, upon their wooden walls and their military forces. They might depend upon it, if republicanism had succeeded upon the Continent, the Irish people would not be left in their present low and miserable condition; the exigencies of the empire would have compelled that House to do them justice. The time might come when this country would deeply regret their policy towards the sister country. There might be a reflux of the tide, when the Irish people would obtain what they wanted. Whatever might happen, he should have the satisfaction of supporting that which he considered more conducive to the interests of both countries; for he would rather suffer his right hand to be cut away from his body than take any other course. He was for freedom for England equally with Ireland.

His countrymen were born equal to the English; and he would never submit to behold an Irishman treated as a slave. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving his Amendment.

The CHAIRMAN said, he apprehended that the proposition of the hon. Member for Meath could not be entertained. It was a Motion affecting the Crown rents. It was, therefore, not competent for the hon. Gentleman to submit such a Motion.

MR. H. GRATTAN: Her Majesty's name does not appear in this proposition.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman will perceive by the terms of his proposition that he intends to deal with the revenue of the Crown. It is not competent for any hon. Member to bring forward a Motion professing to deal with the Crown revenues, unless with the consent of the Crown signified in a proper manner.

The Amendment was then withdrawn.

MR. O. GORE said, he looked upon the speech which had just been made as conveying an accusation against every absentee. [Mr. GRATTAN: I made no accusation.] Although he resided in England, he was proud to acknowledge his connexion with Ireland, and to remember that he once had the honour of representing an Irish county; he also felt proud at the recollection that not much more than two years ago his tenantry in Ireland assembled and voted him one of the handsomest memorials of gratitude that had ever emanated from any similar body, for his kindness to them, and his attention to their wants. Under those circumstances he felt perfectly at ease with regard to the arraignment of the hon. Member (Mr. Grattan). Agreeing in a great deal of what had fallen from him, he did not concur in all that he had said with regard to absentees. Although an absentee landlord might not spend so much money in the country as he would if he resided in it, still, if he performed his duty to his tenantry, and took care of the public institutions of the country, he could hardly be expected to do more. No man could reside in six or seven different places at once. His (Mr. O. Gore's) tenantry in Cornwall might much more justly accuse him of being an absentee landlord than his tenantry in Ireland; while even if he resided in Sligo, his tenantry in Westmeath might complain because he did not reside amongst them. It was impossible, he repeated, to reside everywhere. He entertained a sincere affection for Ireland, having spent there a very happy portion of his life, and there was not a week in which he had not some communication with that country. It was curious that on that very day—the day on which he had been arraigned as an absentee—he had received letters from Sligo, from Leitrim, and from the county of Meath, on the very subject then before the House. He could enter fully into the feelings of the hon. Member (Mr. Grattan), with regard to absentees; especially when he recollected that the hon. Member's father, one of the ablest men that Ireland ever possessed, stood up boldly in his place to oppose the measure which deprived Ireland of a resident gentry by depriving her of her Protestant Parliament. Ireland would never get that Parliament again—it was out of the question. It was his (Mr. O. Gore's) firm conviction that Ireland had always been shamefully ill treated by all the Governments of this country, especially in having been robbed of her staple manufactures over and over again. Need he go into details? Ireland was not understood even at the present day. 50,000*l.*! Why, all the gold of California would not place her in her proper position. He was not opposed to the existence of a poor-law; but he wanted to see one suited to the country, not one which was a bonus on idleness. He would now read an extract from one of the letters to which he had previously referred; premising that the writer, who was, in fact, his own agent, had, at his request, established an agricultural society among the tenantry in Sligo; and that in the last year from twenty to thirty prizes had been distributed. The agent said—

> "The rating for the support of the infirm is of little consequence, as it cannot exceed a shilling in the pound; but if some radical change—[he begged pardon of the House for the use of the word 'radical']—if some radical change be not made for the support of able poverty, it will consume, in these free-trade times, the property of the country."

That Irish labourers were equal to any in the world was proved in 1816, on a comparison of work performed by Irish and English labourers on his own estate in Shropshire. He should oppose this vote of 50,000*l.* on principle, wholly objecting, as he did, to constant applications to this country for that support which would not be at all wanted if Ireland was properly governed and properly managed.

MR. STAFFORD said, however natural it might have been for the hon. Member (Mr. O. Gore) who had last addressed the

House to reply to what he considered a personal attack upon his private conduct as a landlord, still it would be his duty to recall in a few words the attention of the House to subjects which were not of a personal, but of a national character. If the part which he had taken in the House with respect to Irish business, and his conduct with respect to his own property in Ireland, did not sufficiently exculpate him from a charge of want of feeling in relieving the distress of Ireland, at least the fact that he was connected with property in one of the unions which it was intended to relieve out of the proposed grant, would be sufficient to prove his sincerity in the course he was prepared to take with respect to the present measure. The year they had now entered upon, was one that must be marked with great results for good or evil in the history of Ireland; and as they had now experienced not only the political, but still more the social causes of the difficulty and misery under which that island laboured, it was gratifying to him to be enabled to address a House of Commons more disposed than any which had ever assembled to discuss the social evils of Ireland, at all events in no sectarian or party spirit. Her Majesty's Ministers had come forward and asked for a sum which had already, in the course of the evening, been characterised, upon both sides of the House, as miserably inadequate to its professed purpose. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer had distinctly stated that it was only the first of a series. He (Mr. Stafford) hoped that under such circumstances the House would bear with him while he adverted to the grants which had been made from time to time towards the relief of Irish distress. By a return moved for in July, 1847, by the hon. Member for Coventry (Mr. Ellice), the amount of taxes levied in England, and not levied in Ireland, amounted to 10,500,000*l.* To this there ought to be added an allowance for the differential duties which existed in favour of Ireland. Such, for example, as the hawkers' license, charged at 4*l.* in England, and only 2*l.* in Ireland, and even in that case no revenue had hitherto been derived from the tax. If such an allowance was made, it was not too much to say that the hon. Member for Marylebone (Sir B. Hall) was correct in stating that the difference in taxation between the two countries amounted to eleven millions. The next paper to which he would refer, was one moved for in 1848 by his right hon. Friend the Member for Stamford (Mr. Herries), of the sums actually voted for the relief of Irish distress; and he found that the amount stated was 9,536,675*l.*; other items, however, were specified in subsequent pages, which brought up the sum to 10,000,000*l.* By a return moved for in 1845 by the hon. Member for Kilkenny (Mr. J. O'Connell), it appeared that upwards of 11,000,000*l.* had been voted from the national exchequer to the erection of workhouses and other purposes connected with the poor-law. In the absence of all information from the Government as to what further sum might be required for the use of the twenty-one distressed unions, he had endeavoured, by comparing two poor-law returns—the one ending with April and the other with July—to arrive at something like an estimate of the amount of pauperism to be provided for. From these returns he found that in the last week of April, in the twenty-one unions, 270,051 persons were receiving out and indoor relief; and in July the number was 414,807. It was stated in these papers that twenty shillings would—according to the then prices of provisions—afford relief to each pauper for three quarters of a year; and he assumed that, in consequence of the greater cheapness of provisions at the present period, the same amount would now afford similar relief for a whole year. He would assume, too, and he was sure it was a very moderate proposition, that the amount of pauperism in these unions had not increased since July last. The real truth, he conceived, on this point was, that while there was a small diminution of the number of those receiving relief during the harvest, there had been an increase in the number since the harvest. He would take, therefore, one pound per head, in accordance with the statement in these papers as to the amount required for the relief of each pauper, and it would thus appear that a sum of 414,000*l.* would be requisite for the purposes of relief in the twenty-one unions for one year. But in addition to the paupers who had been supported last year by this system of relief, no fewer than 200,000 children had also been relieved out of the funds at the disposal of the British Association, under the superintendence of its agent, Count Strzelecki, whose name and whose zealous exertions in behalf of the suffering Irish ought never to be mentioned without respect and gratitude. He found, therefore, that the year's expenditure in these twenty-one unions had been 468,101*l.*; that, towards that sum, there had been collected 19,023*l.*; that there had been advanced to them 237,200*l.*; that the debts due from them amounted to 123,985*l.*; and that the available rate was 273,481*l.* He doubted the propriety, however, of depending upon what was called the "available rate" returns, for he would defy those connected with the south of Ireland to bring him one case in which the rate had ever been realised — and he considered he was entitled to add a considerable sum to the amount under the head of "debts" of these unions. The result, however, was, that they had 414,000 paupers receiving relief; that they had, besides, at least 100,000 children to be relieved; and, in the absence of any clear and positive information from the Government, and being unable to ascertain what the real amount of destitution was, and what was to be the process for the future, he had come to the conclusion that half a million of money would be absolutely required to maintain the poor in the twenty-one unions from this time till the month of February, 1850. But of the unions in Ireland it had been said there were some ten or eleven, in which, with proper care and management, financial difficulties might be avoided. He much wished the Government had named which those unions were. He asked the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Ireland (Sir W. Somerville) if some unions in Clare and Limerick were not included in that number? Whether, for instance, the union of Newcastle, in the county of Limerick, and the union of Ennis, were not among them? The right hon. Gentleman had understated his case; and he believed that, instead of some ten or eleven unions in which financial difficulty might be avoided, it would turn out that a few months, or even weeks, would add more unions to the list of those already in difficulties. If such, then, was the case with respect to their present position, what, let him ask, were their prospects for the future with reference to these unions? Assuming that they granted this sum—that the House voted this half-million of money all at once, or was ready to advance it in ten successive grants of similar amount — what results would they have produced by this liberality? Those who had read even in a cursory manner the report of the Miscellaneous Estimates Committee of last year, or who had looked through the return which had been moved for by the hon. and learned Gentleman the late Member for Bolton (Dr. Bowring), would be aware that nothing could exceed the perplexing state in which many of the accounts between England and Ireland were kept. With the exception of the poor-law, and the details connected with that system, all their accounts were in perplexity and confusion; it was, however, some satisfaction to know that, so far as the poor-law was concerned, these things would in future be avoided. But the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he made his statement to the House—a most candid, he must say he thought it, and ingenuous statement—declared explicitly that, so far from there being any symptom of returning prosperity in Ireland, more land was laid waste, more capital was leaving the country, more landlords were being ruined, and fewer labourers were being employed. This being the case—and he now came to the more practical part of the question—this being the case made out by Her Majesty's Government, he need not remind hon. Gentlemen acquainted with the process of agriculture, that a very important time of the year, as regarded agricultural operations, was now at hand. And what prospect was there, he asked, that they had—if they should vote this money—expended this 50,000*l.* to support the poor—what certainty had they that the state of all these districts would not be much worse than even it now was, in the month of February, 1850? He firmly believed that it would not only be worse than now, but that desolation would have greatly progressed and extended; and it was for the House to determine within the next few weeks, or even days, whether that desolation should be suffered to proceed, or whether any check should be placed upon its progress. Those who read these papers would see that there was the greatest disinclination to grow spring corn in these districts. In page 5 would be found the evidence of Colonel Gore, the lieutenant of the county Sligo, and a magistrate of Mayo, who said that he was a constant resident upon his estate in the Ballina union; that, before the famine of 1846, he employed near a hundred men a day, to whom he paid weekly wages; that, since 1846, he had lost near one-third of his small tenants; that one-third of his property was unproductive at present, the unproductive part being pretty equally divided between deserted lands and those held by tenants who could not, or would not, pay rent; and that he paid over 1,500*l.* rates since 1846, and owned none, having always made it a point to pay his rates the moment he got the means. The hon. Member also referred to another instance of a proprietor who, having gone over from Lancashire to invest capital in Ireland, had found the rates so oppressive that he had left his land, dismissed 120 labourers, and gone back to Lancashire to wait for better times. Well, but they of the present day boasted that they were far wiser than those that had gone before them; and, yet, what, let him ask, would posterity say of them when they looked at what was the state of the case at the beginning of 1849? A large quantity of land was lying desolate; there were landlords willing to improve their estates, and labourers willing to work; and yet the landlords were being ruined because they were obliged to support those willing labourers in idleness within the walls of the workhouse—both parties anxious, indeed, the one to provide, and the other to obtain, work; and yet the law stepped in to prevent them. The book which he held in his hand spoke of maintaining the people till harvest time; but that was a mere mockery, for harvest in Connaught was forbidden by Act of Parliament. There would be no harvest; and let him tell them that all their proceedings would recoil on their own heads unless they provided some remedy for such a state of things, and they would be compelled to vote this money for what they knew to be hopeless or useless, or they would be held up to public scorn and odium. All this land was lying desolate, and scarcely a sower was going forth to sow, because he knew that no sooner should his seed have come to maturity than his crops would be seized upon to support paupers in idleness. The average size of parishes in England was about 2,500 acres; but 17,000 acres formed the average of these electoral divisions in Ireland; and how was it possible for any man to advance money for the stocking or the sowing of such lands, when not only was there a huge mass of poverty to be supported, but a large arrear of debts to be paid? If these things were true, and if no remedy for them could be suggested by the hon. Gentlemen opposite, then he would ask them to take that diminution of the area of taxation he had ventured to offer; and the strong feeling expressed by the English taxpayers on this grant of 50,000*l.*, far from being unwelcome intelligence to the Irish proprietor, would be the best news that had crossed the Channel for many a long day, because he would see in the expression of that feeling the urgent necessity that existed for his case being taken up by England, and that the feeling in his favour, and the conviction that his interest was their interest, was strong in this country, and was greatly on the increase in that House. It was not his (Mr. Stafford's) wish that those who might vote for the Amendment he now brought forward, should be considered as pledged to agree with him as to any detail connected with the question of the poor-law in Ireland; but he had felt it to be absolutely necessary to point out these results of the system they were pursuing, and the state of affairs with regard to these unions. He thought it right, also, now to mention that they ought, in these papers which the Government had laid before them, to have been furnished with the details of the thirty-one unions referred to, instead of those of twenty-one only. It might be—and, doubtless, it was so—in the present state of Ireland, in the present tone of public opinion in that country, and which they had unfortunately assisted to promote by previous grants of money to it—it might be very difficult for any Irish Member to vote against the grant now proposed. But let the Government mark how many Irish Members had come forward and said, that this grant from the public exchequer would not do the least good. Let them say whether one of those Members, on either side of the House, would get up and tell them that this grant would do anything more than merely alleviate momentary distress—let them say whether they were not still persevering in a course which found no sympathy even from those for whose benefit it was professedly adopted. The hon. Member then proceeded to observe, with reference to the course the Government proposed on the subject of the Irish Poor Law, that, independently of the Boundary Commissioners, there was no subject in regard to which they (the Government) ought to be, and were, in possession of such full information, as they were in respect of that very law. They must have come to some conclusion on that question, or to none; and if in November last they had not arrived at any conclusion as to the best course to be adopted, and could not decide for themselves, why did they not call Parliament together to help them? But if, on the contrary, they had made up their minds in the autumn, he wished to know why this winter came upon them only to change or to confuse their views? He (Mr. Stafford) thought that that House did not deserve by its conduct in regard to Irish affairs in the last Session of Parliament, that the Government should expect opposition upon subjects connected with Ireland. But it was now fit that there should be opposition, and that those who had the welfare of Ireland at heart should begin to speak out respecting the course which had been pursued towards that country by Her Majesty's Government. When the Government were asked, as they recently had been, whether they had any plan ready to submit to Parliament on the subject of Ireland, the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Ireland (Sir W. Somerville) avoided the question; and, afterwards, when pressed upon the subject of the poor-law, the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary (Sir G. Grey) said it was their intention to preserve the main principle of that law. But as regarded a great portion of Ireland, the time for deliberation was passed, and the time for action was come. Let him tell them that legislation could not wait, because the seasons would not wait, for certain details from a Committee on the question of the poor-law. How could this Committee deliberate when they knew, as they well did know, that every hour they postponed their report, rendered less and less the chances of the harvest of 1849? The Government had not scrupled to say, "Unless you consent to vote this money, the people must starve." Place that responsibility on those upon whom it ought to rest — inasmuch as there had been nothing to have prevented them—with the means of information at their disposal, and with the amount of executive ability at their command — nothing to have prevented them from adopting some course or other; neither was there any thing now to prevent them from entering upon instant legislation upon this most important subject. On them, therefore—on the Government—let the grave responsibility rest of having put the House in this serious dilemma. Look, too, at these returns themselves; how inaccurate they were, and how little to be depended upon, when he found that in one union alone—in the union of Ballina—there was absolutely a mistake in the number of paupers of no less than 10,000. The very papers he held in his hand, which the noble Lord had just submitted, in the eagerness of hot haste, to the House, had another mis-statement in regard to the union of Ballina, of 100 holdings; and in this way, and upon returns which could not be depended upon, passed hastily through the press, without time to read them, far less to examine them, the House was called to legislate. But this was not all, for Her Majesty's Ministers came forward and said that they had no measure of their own, and that they could put no limit to the sums they intended to ask for; compelling the House, while obtaining from other and more accurate returns the information necessary to make an estimate, to labour under the imputation of cruelty, and a willingness to doom to death their fellow subjects, or else to take the word of the Government, that 414,000 paupers required the means of subsistence, and that 50,000*l.* was the sum requisite to support them. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Ripon (Sir J. Graham) had stated that this was to be his last grant, while it was admitted at the same time that that sum would only be six weeks' maintenance to those paupers. He would therefore ask those who talked of giving grants now, or permitting the people to starve, where they were prepared to stop? Here was a new Session of Parliament, and the commencement of a new financial year, and he trusted they would not forget the past. They had Ireland relieved of 11,000,000*l.* of taxes, and receiving 10,000,000*l.* in grants —and with what result? The present of Connaught was the future of Munster. Had Her Majesty's Ministers made out any thing like a case for the course which they were now pursuing? He would not have said one word in reference to any alienation that might exist on the part of England towards Ireland—for he did not believe that any such alienation existed—had he not heard with regret, allusions to it in the course of the debate. He believed that whatever opinions might be entertained with regard to grants of public money, the liveliest gratitude was entertained by the Irish for the noble exertions made by private individuals on their behalf. The way to win over the affections of the Irish people was not to pander to their faults. They were divided into two classes—those who were anxious to discharge their duty, and those who were determined not to discharge it. In this hour of Ireland's trial she could not be righted without the infliction of an amount of individual privation and sorrow, which he was sure every Member of the House would regret. A recent frightful accident which occurred on board a steamer belonging to Ireland, formed an apt illustration of the position of that country. The captain of the steamer being fearful that some of his passengers would be washed overboard in a storm, forced them into the hold for protection, and thought to preserve the whole; but the very means taken to save them destroyed them. So would it be with Ireland, if, by their legislation, they bound up the improving with the negligent. They could not save the negligent, but they might and certainly would overwhelm the industrious. He felt this so strongly that it was impossible for him to address the House without alluding to it. With regard to the question of grants he knew very well, from his experience during the time he lived in Ireland, what false hopes and evil propensities the least notion of a grant from England originated. And when he looked at all the money spent in public works, and found that no individual was the richer or the better for it—he knew not where it was gone, but it certainly had left no trace of fertility behind it—he did not for a moment doubt but that this 50,000*l.* would go after the 10,000,000*l.*, or that 50,000,000*l.* would go with no better result, unless the system were changed. That change ought to be brought forward now; and he could find no language strong enough to express his condemnation of Her Majesty's Government, for trying to throw the responsibility upon a Committee, while the period was fast speeding away in which that change could be of the least avail. They who intended to vote for the addition to the resolution which he should have the honour to submit to the House, felt that it was unfair and unjust to place them in the position they would occupy. They were placed in a position which would make it appear as though they had no feeling for the distresses and miseries of Ireland—as if they would willingly permit thousands of their fellow-subjects to starve—because they raised their voices in behalf of the hardly and heavily taxed people of England. The Government said there was nothing for it but to pay the money without inquiry, and that the future policy of the House must be decided by the Committee; but that was a state of things which would never be suffered to pass unchallenged; and upon the Government which had charge of this great empire the responsibility must rest — they could not remove from it, they must abide by it—of having placed the Opposition in the position of appearing to close their ears and shut their eyes against compassion, or else to agree to a vote which would fill England with discontent, and hand over Ireland to the lassitude of universal ruin. He concluded by moving, as an addition to the original Motion—

> " That, in the opinion of this Committee, the application to Parliament for any sum of money for the relief of such distress, ought to have been accompanied with an estimate of the probable amount which will be required for this purpose; that the continual application of sums of money, raised by the general taxation of the Country, to the relief of such distress, is vicious in principle, unjust in practice, and impolitic with respect to the suffering districts themselves, as tending to destroy all spirit of self-reliance; that it is the duty of Her Majesty's Government to introduce, without delay, measures which may obviate the future necessity of applying to Parliament for the relief of local distress in Ireland."

LORD J. RUSSELL said: Sir, I certainly am relieved by the statement made by the hon. Member (Mr. Stafford) who has just sat down, that it is not his intention to oppose the grant of 50,000*l.* for the immediate relief of the distress existing in some parts of Ireland. I own I should have considered the visiting on the distressed unions in that country, and on their inhabitants, who are without the means of support, that censure which the hon. Member feels ought to be passed upon the Government, would, in the first place, be unjust, and in the second would be visiting on the unoffending, a starving and a miserable people, faults which, if they deserve censure, ought to be censured as the faults of those who occupy the position of the Government of this country. I am glad to find that the hon. Member, instead of opposing the grant, has thought proper to move a series of resolutions reflecting on the conduct of the Government. But, Sir, I cannot but think the hon. Gentleman has taken a course which cannot be defended or justified by anything which has occurred during the course of the present discussions. The hon. Gentleman says in his first resolution—

> " That, in the opinion of this Committee, the application to Parliament for a grant of money for the relief of this distress, ought to have been accompanied with an estimate of the probable amount required for that purpose."

Now I say, in the first place, that this is what has never been done by any previous Government under similar circumstances to the present. I alluded the other evening to two cases which served as precedents to the present vote—I mean the grants of 1822 and 1846. In the first instance, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge (Mr. Goulburn), who I see has just taken his place, was then Secretary for Ireland, and he brought forward in the month of April, 1822, a proposal for granting 50,000*l.* in order to employ and feed the poor of Ireland. At a subsequent part of the Session, some few months afterwards, another proposal of 100,000*l.* for the same purpose was agreed to. In 1846 one of the first votes of the Session was that of 50,000*l.* for Public Works. Then came the Ports and Harbours Bill—a further grant of 50,000*l.*; and then the Drainage Bill, amounting altogether to 228,000*l.* in loans, and 220,000*l.* in grants. Such have been the modes taken by Government in cases somewhat similar to the present. They have come forward at the commencement of the Session, and have asked for some vote or proposed some measure which they thought necessary for the immediate relief of the distress, and proceeding according to the necessity of the times as the Session advanced. But it appears to me, Sir, that that is the obvious and necessary course. I think, if the Government were to come forward and to say, as the hon. Gentleman does, " Let us vote at once four or five hundred thousand pounds for the relief of the distressed unions in Ireland," that you might be quite sure that that four or five hundred thousand pounds would be spent; but you would have no security at all that you would not be asked for further sums. But, Sir, it is impossible to say with regard to particular districts of the country how much may be required until you have the case before you, and know the urgency of the moment. Now with respect to the union of Ballina: the guardians who are there state that it might be possible to collect a further rate, but they think that the collection of that further rate immediately would destroy the means of the farmers still remaining, and the prospects to be anticipated from the harvest. They therefore advise, with a view to allow the industry of the country to have some chance of maintaining the people of the country, that advances should be made in the interim, and no new rate be struck till May; and, according to their opinion, by that period there will be the means of collecting a rate sufficient for the destitute poor of that union. Now, would it be wise in us to say that in May we suppose there will be no such means, and, therefore, to vote the necessary relief for the whole year without knowing what the case may be? I apprehend not; and I conceive, therefore, both according to precedent and to obvious and practical reason as concerns this matter, that we have taken the course which we were justified in taking, and that we should have been liable to censure, if, instead of that course, we had adopted the one which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stafford) recommends. And yet a vote of censure for that conduct of ours forms the first part of the hon. Gentleman's resolution. The next part of his resolution is—

> "That the continual application of sums of money raised by the general taxation of the Country to the relief of such distress, is vicious in principle, unjust in practice, and impolitic with respect to the suffering districts themselves, as tending to destroy all spirit of self-reliance."

Why, I think, Sir, that this is nothing more than a truism. I entirely agree with the spirit of that resolution. Nothing can be worse than the continual grants of money for this purpose. It tends to destroy self-reliance, tends to make the people improvident, and is no doubt vicious in principle. I confess I think that there are many cases of the kind in which grants or measures are vicious in principle, but in which the extraordinary circumstances of the case justify the Government and justify this House in acceding to them. When a House is on fire, measures which would be very wrong, such as defacing a part of the building and destroying the furniture, if done wantonly and when there is no occasion for them, would be quite justifiable under the extraordinary circumstances of the case—and so here. But, Sir, the hon. Gentleman goes on to say, that " it is the duty of Her Majesty's Government to introduce, without delay, measures which may obviate the future necessity of applying to Parliament for the relief of local distress in Ireland." Now, Sir, upon this subject I am obliged both to refer to what has been done, and to what it is proposed to do. With regard to what has been done, let us not omit that which is the extraordinary feature of this case—that which makes it, as far as the present crisis has gone, extraordinary in the history of the world, but yet which has been entirely overlooked in the speech of the hon. Gentleman. He has spoken of the distress of Ireland as the ordinary and usual distress of that country. Now the fact, as I apprehend it, is, that there has been, by the fault of whom you please—I say not now by the fault of the laws or of the people—but there has been an immense population growing up in certain parts of Ireland, and more especially in districts near the sea coast, where sea-weed could be plentifully collected for manure—a population, fed, not by the wages of labour, not employed by the farmers; but fed by means of small patches of ground, on which potatoes were grown sufficient for the immediate wants of themselves and their families. There has happened during the last few years a succession of calamities, sweeping away that food on which the people depended, not affording them, but rather depriving them of, those means of support and employment which must have been extended to a very great degree in order to relieve such want and famine as those calamities occasioned. There have been then, Sir, multitudes of people who have been altogether without employment and without food. Now, we can imagine, in a less civilised state of the world, that if any such failure of food had taken place, a million, or two or three millions, of persons would have been swept away; and afterwards that another population would have taken their place, and a new cultivation would have succeeded to that which had gone before. But this, allowing of the operation of famine to take its course in a country with which we are so nearly connected, and without holding out a hand to check its ravages, would have been a course inconsistent with the humanity of this House, inconsistent with the feelings of this country, and, I will add, shocking and revolting to the minds of every civilised nation in the world. Well then, Sir, in 1847 we made extraordinary efforts in order to keep those people alive. In that year the people of this country raised subscriptions to an immense amount for that purpose. That subscription lasted through 1848, and numbers of persons—200,000, as it is stated by the Poor Law Commissioners—were supplied with food. By means of the British Association last year, many more persons, perhaps more than a million, were kept alive. The hon. Gentleman says, " But by those means you made things worse; they still remain without the means of employment." Sir, I totally deny that consequence. I think that the efforts you made in 1847, and that the efforts that were made by the British Association in 1848, have enabled many of those persons to emigrate to other countries; and, having surmounted the immediate season of despair, to find in other lands a reward for their toil, and to look forward for the future to the enjoyment of comforts more extended than they could ever have possessed in their original position. I do not now, Sir, enter into the question whether the money has been rightly spent, into whether it has been expended in an unprofitable or imprudent manner, instead of in the surest possible manner. All that I consider but a small part of the question. The real question was, whether or no it was advisable to keep as many people alive as possible. That object I think we did accomplish; and that having been accomplished, I think we as a nation have reason to be proud. Well, then, Sir, I admit that after these exertions, if you should find that you have still the same thing to repeat, that you have nothing to do but to spend millions every year in order to keep the destitute poor, who are called " idle," but who may more properly be called " unemployed;" I do admit that that would be a most unsatisfactory result and a most dreary prospect; but, in the first place, let it be recollected that when this House consented to the grant of immense sums of money, they laid down as a rule to be conceded to your legislation that in future the property of Ireland should be made responsible for the poverty of Ireland. Now, let us consider how much was implied in that. They had heard much of absenteeism—much of the conduct of landlords. There are, as the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stafford) said just now, both good and bad landlords. I believe that there are many good landlords in Ireland whose conduct is deserving every approbation, and whose exertions during these past years entitle them to the gratitude of their country. But, with regard to the bad landlord—previous to the introduction of the poor-law, he did nothing but receive the rent of his estates—not a single farm-house, not a farm-building, was erected by his means—no drainage was carried on by his capital—the beggar and destitute poor received no help from his charity. Such was the conduct of the bad landlord. But he cannot be so indifferent now. Whether he choose to live in Ireland or not, whether he choose to perform his duties or not, a rate is levied for the support of the destitute poor on his property, and of the produce of Ireland a share is allotted to those poor people whom his conduct has contributed to fix on his estate, but of whom, before that time, he might have been regardless. Well, then, we have passed for Ireland a large and extended poor-law. What has that poor-law done in the past year towards the object of maintaining the poor? Why, during the past year, no less than 1,700,000*l.* has been collected in Ireland for the purpose of maintaining the infirm and ablebodied poor; and I am happy to say that, according to calculations which I have seen, the number of ablebodied poor supported by the poor-rate is by no means so great as that which any one would have anticipated from the former accounts of the Poor Law Commission of Inquiry, and from statistical documents of authenticity. I am told that of that 1,700,000*l.* not above 300,000*l.* can be considered as having been contributed to the outdoor relief of the ablebodied poor. Such is the calculation made by one of the Commissioners of the Poor Law. Then you have advanced this step, that with regard to the support of the poor in Ireland, a very great proportion at least of the means is now obtained from the rates collected in Ireland, and out of the property in Ireland. Take the advances made last year by the British Association and by the Government, and you will find that so far from being the greater part given for the support of destitution, they do not amount to one-fifth or one-sixth of the whole amount given for that purpose, so that the remaining four-fifths or five-sixths were contributed by the property of Ireland. If that is the result, Sir, we at least see with respect to the relief of the poor that Ireland has greatly contributed, and I think that that is a reason why this House should be more ready than it otherwise would have been—more ready than it should have been in 1822 and 1846, although at that time you proved yourselves most ready to come to the assistance of the destitute poor in Ireland—to come forward to relieve the existing distress. But not only is that the case. There is another pleasing circumstance to be considered. The number of unions to which large contributions were made by the British Association and the Government, is very few. Out of 130 unions in Ireland, not above 21 received that support. Here again you see that you are bringing the matter more within compass, and that so far from the evil becoming worse, you are confining it within a narrow district, and that district one almost entirely marked by the features which I have mentioned, namely, that the people live not by wages, not by employment, but upon potatoes raised from the sea-weed, to which I have before referred, as manure. Then, Sir, is there no hope that there may be some remedy? The hon. Member (Mr. Stafford) told us that there was no hope of any improvement or of any remedy with regard to the distressed unions. I hold in my hand a report of the Poor Law Commissioners, representing the very distressed state of many unions, dated the 11th December, 1848. In that report it is said—

> "In several unions the outdoor relief is far less in extent than it was at the corresponding period last year. For example, in the Kenturk union there were in the week ended 27th November, 1847, 18,460 persons relieved out of the workhouse at a cost of 472*l.*; in the week ended 25th November, 1848, the number was 2,323 only, at a cost of 46*l.* In Killarney union, the number receiving outdoor relief in the week ended 27th November, 1847, was 8,495, at a cost of 289*l.*; in the week ended 25th November, 1848, the number was 2,129, at a cost of 66*l.* These instances show the degree in which an improved management, assisted by additional workhouse accommodation, has served to keep in check the outdoor relief which suddenly arose in 1847-8 under the influence of the example of the Temporary Relief Act, and while the machinery of administration under the permanent poor-law was yet new and inexperienced."

I say, therefore, that you do find that there is a prospect of improvement with regard to some of these unions. I come now to the consideration as to what prospect can be held out to the people; and here I must notice a statement, repeated frequently by hon. Gentlemen, that my right hon. Friend (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) said, that the present must be the first of a series of grants. My right hon. Friend has no recollection of having made any such statement. That he said, and I said afterwards, that we would not pledge ourselves that this should be the only grant during the Session of Parliament is perfectly true; and I say again, I would not consent, if the 50,000*l.* was granted at once, without any remark or observation, to tie my hands, and not to ask for more from this House. I think that I should not be doing my duty in the condition in which I am placed if I consented so to be fettered in respect to the conduct of the Government; but, having said this, I do admit that there is one point of view in which this question has been placed in which I think the reason of those, not who have objected to the grant, but who have desired explanation and discussion upon this grant, is natural and reasonable—I mean when they say there are very considerable taxes imposed upon Great Britain, in which Ireland has no part—there are many parts of Ireland which seem not only to be not suffering this extreme distress, but seem as capable as any part of England, or of Scotland, of bearing their part of the burden, and therefore the subject ought to be considered by those who have to administer the affairs of the country. Sir, I stated the other night that I should think it my duty to propose to the Committee of the House of Commons this measure, which I thought necessary for the amendment of the poor-law, and to provide for the future amendment of the law in such a manner that I thought would be beneficial to Ireland, and least burdensome to this country. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stafford) finds fault with the Government because they proposed to appoint a Committee; he says that they should at once have come forward in the month of November with a measure upon the subject. Why, Sir, we thought last year that it was desirable upon this important subject to obtain the benefit of experience, and amongst that experience I find that one of the many charges with respect to the poor-law is, that it was proposed in this House by Gentlemen who had the conduct of affairs in this country, who had not sufficient local knowledge with respect to Ireland. If that is the case—if that is the accusation against us—if we had met Parliament, and said, " Here is our measure ready prepared; we have not consulted Irish Gentlemen on the subject, but it is ready prepared, and we do not mean to alter it from your representations "—it would have been said, why not consult those who have local experience on the subject? Let them know what your plans are, ask their advice, and see whether they would be practicable. Sir, I think one of the amendments to be proposed in the poor-law should contemplate an encourragement to those who would be prepared to lay out their capital and to improve and cultivate the land in those parts where, partly from the entire failure of the crops for the last three or four years, and partly from the burdens which have been imposed, there is now an unwillingness to enter on the occupation of those lands. But, Sir, in so doing, I confess I should not be prepared to rush at once to that division of the country which the hon. Gentleman seems, in his frequent speeches, to contemplate; I own I cannot imagine that there should be a division with regard to each property in Ireland; that each of the small properties in Ireland should be formed into an electoral division, without leading to the consequence of a law of settlement, and thereby doing that which I think has been a great misfortune in England—which I should be sorry to see introduced into Ireland, namely, impeding the free circulation of labour, and depriving the labourer of his right. Besides which a law of settlement implies a law of removal. If you found a man in Bedfordshire whose parish was in Gloucestershire, you would remove him; but what would be the consequence if you found men rushing, as they all do in the early part of the spring, from Connaught into other parts of Ireland, or into England, and Scotland, and you were to send them back to those districts in Connaught which are most pauperised, and where they are at present utterly incapable of supporting themselves? There could not be a greater cruelty to the people of Ireland than to enforce the strict law of settlement against removal in that country. Therefore, in proposing any plan of amendment to the Committee, I shall endeavour, in the first place, to provide for the greater encouragement of capital and employment of industry; and, in the next place, I own I do consider it just that in some way or other Ireland should be made further to support the cases of exception in Ireland, and that those cases should not come exclusively as a charge on the public expenditure. Whether what I shall propose on this subject is practicable or not, is of course a question of immense importance; and upon the solution of that question would much depend what is the course we might hereafter think it necessary to take on this question. Now, Sir, the hon. Gentleman says upon this subject that it is the duty of Her Majesty's Government to introduce without delay a measure which may obviate the future necessity of applying to Parliament for the relief of local distress in Ireland. I do contemplate a measure which would have that tendency. I think there are other questions with respect to local taxation in Ireland, upon which measures are under consideration, which will be introduced, and upon which I think it will be necessary to legislate in the course of the present Session. I do myself consider that it may be possible to go through this great transition; one of the most extraordinary transitions that ever took place—a transition which is not the act of any Parliament or of any Government, but a transition which has been brought about by the calamity of the loss of the potato crop; a transition from a state of the population living upon their own plots of ground, to a state of the population consisting chiefly of farmers and labourers. I do look forward with hope that the transition may be brought about without any very great loss of life. No doubt a very considerable loss of property has already taken place; but considering the vastness of the changes, considering the sudden manner in which the change has come upon us, we have less of suffering, less of loss of life, than any one could have anticipated, if we had been told two years before that the loss of the food of the country for so many years would have taken place. Now, Sir, I leave it to the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stafford) to pursue his own course; and if he thinks it necessary to push this Motion, as a declaration against the Government, to a division, I can only say that he has taken that course which is best adapted to the exigencies in which he stands; that I do not think it would have been advisable to have brought forward a Bill for the amendment of the poor-law without a grant; that I should not have been justified in coming to the House and asking the House for a temporary grant for the relief of distress. I feel confident—nothing will persuade me to the contrary—that this House will assent to the grant which we have proposed. I feel confident that they will not visit upon these wretched and destitute people in Connaught any faults that we have committed—any want of foresight in not proposing a measure in November—any want of the adaptation of the present measure to the end that we have in view. But, agreeing to the proposal, undoubtedly the House may think it proper to accompany the vote with the resolution which the hon. Gentleman has proposed. With respect to that, it is entirely in the hands of the House to decide as they shall think proper. I have given what I must say I think is a fair account of the position in which we stand. I have given some views to the House of the nature of the measures that we shall have to propose, My belief is that you cannot, by any one measure, remedy a state of society which has been, from the year 1760 at least, one of suffering, of crime, of division of landlord and tenant, of division of one class from another, of conspiracy frequently repeated; of laws of repression continually enacted in the hope of permanent tranquillity continually frustrated. If it be true, as I believe it is, that the hope has been frustrated because the state of society in Ireland brought on those contentions for land, brought on those assassinations of proprietors, brought on the perpetual war of one class against another; if that be true, then it is only by a total change in the state of society that these evils can be remedied; and if it is only by a total change in the state of society that these evils can be remedied, let me, with all deference to the hon. Gentleman, tell him, that if he were on these benches to-morrow to propose a measure for the purpose, that a great social change cannot be effected in one, two, or three years; that it must be the work of time; but that I do believe, with time, with patience, with a judicious adaptation of the remedies, we may arrive at that result which we all desire, that of seeing the state of Ireland improved, and at length happy.

The MARQUESS of GRANBY said: I entirely concur with the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) in thinking that it would be a most unfair and ungenerous proceeding on our part to attempt to saddle on the poor of Ireland the consequences which I believe to have been occasioned by the negligence and indiscretion of Government. But while we are prepared to vote this sum for the relief of distress in Ireland, we do think we have a clear right to require that we should be furnished with some definitive estimate of the total sum which Her Majesty's Ministers propose should be expended in this manner. What we contend for is, that the continual application of sums of money raised by the general taxation of the country to the purpose of relieving local distress in Ireland, is injudicious even so far as the suffering districts are concerned, as being calculated to destroy the spirit of self-reliance, at the same time that it fails to furnish a permanent remedy for the distress of the people. That the people in certain districts of the west of Ireland are enduring dreadful hardship, and are exposed to a degree of suffering which it is appalling to contemplate, is impossible to doubt after perusing the papers which have been recently put into our hands. The dreadful picture presented in those pages, shows us landlords and tenants ruined—peasants without food, clothing, or employment—workhouses overflowing — deaths daily increasing—guardians without money or credit—contractors unwilling to forward the necessary supplies. Such is the terrible state of things we are called to contemplate. But that is not all. I fear that there is but slender hope that the condition of these poor creatures will be materially ameliorated. The noble Lord at the head of the Government has assured us of great progress towards the amelioration of the condition of the people; but I do not think that this is an opinion in which the Poor Law Commissioners, or gentlemen resident in Ireland, and practically acquainted with that country, will be likely to concur. The noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) has made a mistake in taking the whole of Ireland together, and in not separating the north from the west and south; and I maintain, that unless you view each province by itself, it will be impossible for you to arrive at a correct conclusion as to the real condition of the whole. He (the Marquess of Granby) found that in twenty-one unions the amount of rates collected was 1,985,660*l.*, in addition to which there had been a vast deal paid through the Government and the British Association, not less than 2,360,000*l.* He, therefore, did not feel there was that cause for future hope in those parts of Ireland he had referred to, which the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) appeared to think. Sir, I do not intend, at this late hour of the night, to trouble the House with any long extracts from the papers which have been laid before us; but I will, if the House will allow me, read one extract, because I conceive it of great importance that the picture it conveys should be placed before the House. It is an extract of a letter of the vice-guardians of the union of Bantry. These vice-guardians say—

> "As to the degree in which destitution prevails, and the prospects of its cessation or diminution—destitute is a term usually and fitly applied to the lowest and most dependent grade in civilised society. It is, however, a term that conveys no idea of the privations and sufferings of a large proportion of the people in this wretched union, without clothing, without food, without employment, and with no hope whatever, save from the relieving officer, or from the chilly protection of the workhouse. We have given much and most earnest attention to their whole condition, and we have also had pretty extensive communications with well-informed parties from each of the electoral divisions, and we have found an entire unanimity of opinion as to the pitiable state of the whole of the labouring poor. We are, therefore, grieved to state that we cannot see any prospect whatever of a cessation or diminution of their present misery; on the contrary, we are compelled to express our fears that their wants and their sufferings will considerably increase."

I am sure, Sir, we must all feel that this statement truly pictures what is the present condition of a large portion of the people of Ireland; and such, I fear, for some time to come, will be the picture we must look forward to. Sir, under present circumstances lands are thrown out of cultivation, the people are thrown out of employment, and no tenant with capital will take the land. Why, Sir, is this? What cloud hangs over this unfortunate district of Ireland? What blighting influence is it which prevents the employment of capital? What is it that drives capital away from the country? Why, Sir, it is the effect of the poor-law. The capitalist feels that he has no protection, and should he cultivate the land, it may be taken from him for arrears of poor-rates. How can we expect that any man will employ his capital in the cultivation of the land, when he feels that it may be taken from him to pay for an arrear of rate? Again, how can we expect any one to cultivate the land, when he knows, whatever exertions he may make—whatever employment he may give to the poor—he will have to pay for the support of the poor of his idle neighbour? Sir, it is impossible under such a state of circumstances to expect that there will be an amelioration in the state of Ireland. Sir, the noble Lord admits that the law has been vicious in its operation; but he states that extreme cases require extreme remedies. He says, if a house is on fire we must not be particular in the means which we take to put it out. Now, Sir, what we wish, for we do not object to the advance of the 50,000*l.*, but we wish to give it combined with such conditions that we shall not be asked for a renewal of the grant. What we wish is not only to put out the fire, but to take precautions that the fire shall not occur again. Then, Sir, the noble Lord refers to 1847, when the people of this country came nobly forward to relieve the distress in Ireland, to show the feeling existing with respect to that country. Sir, it would be unfortunate indeed if the charity of the people of this country was to be used as an argument for making perpetual demands on their resources. Sir, with respect to the area of taxation, the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) says it would be most unfortunate if, by any alteration of those areas, the labourer was deprived of the result of his labour; but, Sir, the question is not whether the labourer shall be deprived of the result of his labour, but whether he shall be employed at all. Sir, what we are anxious to know is this, how long this state of things is to last—how long the Irish population are to be taught to look to the liberality of England—how long the Ministry are to trust to the forbearance of the Opposition? Have you no remedial measures to bring forward—have you no plan for the improvement of Ireland? It is true that you have appointed a Committee to inquire into the Poor Law. Why, Sir, as my hon. Friend (Mr. Stafford) has stated, the result of the operation of that law is already known. This is not a time for inquiry, but for measures of vigour; and I cannot but think that such measures would do more to restore the prosperity of that country than Committees of Inquiry. Sir, Her Majesty's Government were not always so ready to refer matters of importance to Committees of this House, when laws which affected the industry of this country were to be discussed—when a code of two centuries was proposed to be swept away. Her Majesty's Government would not wait for the report of a Committee of Inquiry. But now that they require a law for the protection of the people and property of Ireland, Her Majesty's Government shrink from the responsibility of proposing it. Sir, this grant of 50,000*l*. to Ireland is a tax on the people of this country, while I do not think, under present circumstances, it will be materially beneficial to the people of Ireland. Sir, I will not trouble the House at any greater length at this late hour, but for the grounds I have stated I must give my support to the Amendment of my hon. Friend (Mr. Stafford).

Colonel SIBTHORP said, he would not vote for the grant on any conditions whatever. He had listened with the greatest attention to what had fallen from his hon. Friend the Member for Northamptonshire (Mr. Stafford), and if he understood him right he meant to vote for the grant, with some conditions attached to it. Now this he (Colonel Sibthorp) would not do. He would yield to no man in the House, he might safely say, in humanity and consideration for his fellow-creatures; but he told the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) before, and he told him again, that he had no confidence in any of his propositions. The noble Lord would hold out to them no promise that this vote was to be the first and last. The noble Lord had told them, if he understood him rightly, that he was not capable of bringing forward comprehensive measures for the amelioration of Ireland. He would, therefore, only infer that the noble Lord meant to steal this vote from the House merely to pacify those without whose votes and assistance he could not sit where he now did. Then there was another ground on which he opposed this grant—the distressed state of this country. There was such a thing as drawing too much from the well, and finding it dry at last. The noble Lord appeared to have no consideration for those whom he and the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth (Sir R. Peel) had brought into distress—the farmers of the country. He repeated that he would not trust the noble Lord a single tittle; and, looking to the condition of the country at large, looking to the condition of the farmers, and indeed of all classes, he would vote against this dirty, Jesuitical, low, and pitiful grant.

Mr. HUME rose merely to state what course those who meant to object both to the Motion and the Amendment meant to take. He could not agree to the additions which were proposed by the hon. Member for Northamptonshire (Mr. Stafford), because he thought them inconsistent in first agreeing to the grant, and then protesting against it. He disapproved of the grant; and he meant to divide first against the resolutions; and if they were rejected, then he would take the sense of the House against the grant.

Mr. MUNTZ said, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, he could not allow the House to go to a vote without expressing his opinion upon the question before them. The other night he had voted against the Government, because he could not honestly or conscientiously support it, and on the present occasion he must do so again. He could not see how they could call upon the people of this country, taxed as they were, to contribute endless gratuities for the relief of Ireland; and they were particularly told that the application of that night would not be the last. The right hon. Member for Ripon (Sir J. Graham) had told them the other night that they could not allow the people to starve—that he would vote for the present grant, but that he would never vote for another. The time had been when he (Mr. Muntz) should have considered the right hon. Gentleman a great authority in such matters; but he must now allow him to remark, that some time ago he had informed the House that he had changed all his opinions of the previous thirty years, and therefore he (Mr. Muntz) doubted the soundness of his judgment, and could not see how the right hon. Gentleman would be able to refuse the next similar application which must be made. Now, he (Mr. Muntz) hoped, when he was giving his own money away, that he could be as charitable as any one; but he had to consider that he was the representative of others, and that he had to deal with their funds. He did not see any improvement that was likely to take place in the condition of Ireland; on the contrary, he believed that condition would get a great deal, and rapidly, worse. He believed, too, that a great deal of that distress was to be attributed to the general system of Government, that there should be cheap food and dear money. He asked whether there was any opportunity afforded for an advance in the value of produce, or a decrease in the value of money? They were told it was to come from California. He was prepared to admit that if the proceeds of California were in any proportion to the reports, all our difficulties might thereby be removed; but all depended upon the quantity of gold which would come, and the speed with which it came, for all Ireland might be dead before it did come. He was free to admit that if the gold of that country were already here, it might be beneficial; but it must be a work of time before any quantity could arrive, and they might all die first. What was the position this country was in, that she was supposed to be fit and ought to be called upon to pay such a demand upon her resources? Hon. Gentlemen had told him, and he had seen in the papers, that they were all well off in Birmingham, which was never more prosperous. Well, he always heard in London and in that House what he could not hear at home; but he went home on Saturday last, and instead of finding the prosperity spoken of, he was told by every one that trade was extremely flat and unprofitable, and that they could see no chance of there being any improvement so long as they were compelled to compete with foreign manufacturers. That very morning he met one of his own travellers who had just returned from the north of Europe, and he asked him what was the state of trade in Germany. He replied that there was plenty of trade in Germany, but that it was not with England, as the Germans could manufacture cheaper themselves; and notwithstanding the very low prices prevailing in this country, it was impossible to compete with them. A curious circumstance had lately occurred to him (Mr. Muntz), to which he wished to call the particular attention of the House. Three or four years ago, the glass manufacturers of Birmingham were anxious to have free trade. They came to him and said, that if the duty was taken off glass, they could do a good trade. He cautioned them on the subject, and told them that they employed Bohemians, Belgians, and Germans in their manufactories, at high wages, and that if the duty were removed, they would have a heavy competition to contend with. They said they were aware of that, but it was highly desirable for the interests of the trade that the duty should be taken off. Well, he accompanied a deputation of the trade to meet the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth, and he was horror-struck to find that the first thing they asked for was protection for three years. He (Mr. Muntz) said to them, "Why, I thought you came here to ask for free trade;" to which they replied, "So we do; but we want protection for three years, just to prepare us for the change, after which it will be all right." His next question was, "Well, but tell me why you will be better prepared in three years to compete with foreign manufacturers than you now are?" to which they replied, "Oh, let us have free trade, and we can compete with all the world;" and he (Mr. Muntz) then told them that at the end of the three years they would ask for protection. Well, to show them what had been the result of that measure, he would take the liberty of reading to the House a letter upon the subject which he had received from Birmingham within the last few days. It was as follows:—

"Birmingham, February 5, 1849.

"Dear Sir—As the import duties on flint-glass will expire soon, the trade is, I fear, in danger of expiring also in this country, owing to those countries whose manufactures are protected by an import duty being allowed, duty free, to send all their excess of production here, thus keeping up their prices at home, by not glutting their market: at the same time ruining ours. The manufacturers of this district are anxious to memorialise for a continuance of duty, being persuaded that they can prove that that alone will protect our trade, from the peculiar character of

> our manufacture. I have written to Mr. Scholefield, Mr. Spooner, and Mr. Newdegate, to ask their opinion and co-operation; will you oblige me with your advice upon the subject?—Your's faithfully."

He (Mr. Muntz) told them that they could do as they pleased, and, if they wished it, he would be happy to present their memorial. That was not a solitary case; but other trades were in the same condition. When they saw in the papers that trade was recovering, that trade was better, it was just like the case of a man with fever, who had been laid up with fever for twelve months, and was enabled to get up and sit in his arm-chair for half an hour. He might say that he was a little better; but so far from its being a sign of solid improvement, there might be reason to fear immediate dissolution. The fact was, that not only the glass trade, but half the other trade of Birmingham had vanished and gone to the Continent, in consequence of the competition which existed. Now, they had been told that there was an improvement in the trade of Birmingham; and, what was most strange, in two of the trades which had most suffered, and were still very bad, two of the trades which he particularly saw noticed in the public press as having improved, was the gilt-toy trade and the brassfounders. Now, he had formerly exported per annum thousands of pounds' worth in those trades, but he did not now expend as many shillings in them. There were formerly sixty or seventy gilt-toy makers in Birmingham, but there were now only four or five, and they had nothing to do. There were certainly more brassfounders remaining, but they were very slack, and badly paid, in consequence of foreign competition. Were the people of this country in a position, then, to be called upon for this grant? The distresses of the Irish were now attributed to the potato rot; but did they never hear of distress in Ireland before? Did they recollect the year 1822? Was there no distress at that time? Was there not a king's begging letter, and also immense private subscriptions, and Government grants, to relieve the most wretched misery? If they went back to the year 1842, when the right hon. Baronet (Sir R. Peel) was in office, they would find there was distress at that time; but they did not hear of any potato rot. He believed that the rot under which Ireland suffered was not the potato rot, but a rot of another kind. He opposed the grant because the Government did not say that, if they made it, they could show that they could make Ireland prosperous. What would 50,000*l.* be to relieve the distress existing in Ireland? Why, it would be like a mere drop in the ocean, and the money would be thrown away. Out of doors there was a great feeling against granting the money, not from a feeling of parsimony, but because the people conscientiously felt that they would soon be seeking for something to be given to themselves. The people felt that they could not afford to pay the taxes, and they looked for relief in the reduction of taxation. He liked economy as much as any one, and it ought to be carried out as far as possible, consistently with the honour, power, and interest of the nation. He liked to see any such reduction, but it was useless to look for much relief from that source, because there was very little margin to act upon when they had made provision for the interest of the debt, and the necessary expenses of the State. The plan implied that the only way in which any material saving could be made in the expenditure of the country was by the abandonment of their colonies. He did not believe, if they looked at such a proposition in a *£ s. d.* point of view, that that would be any great loss to the country, as under our present system the colonies are free to trade everywhere; therefore, whilst we secure no exclusive advantage with our colonies, we pay all the expenses necessary for their security. He admitted that they might reduce their expenditure by abandoning their colonies; but there was a moral point of view upon which the question ought to be considered, and that was—are we justified, after encouraging men to emigrate and colonise, in leaving them to the mercy of the world, without that support which they had justly calculated upon? He again repeated that he could not conscientiously vote for the grant, and he must, therefore, vote both against the Government, and against the Amendment.

The Committee divided on Mr. Stafford's Amendment:—Ayes 125; Noes 245: Majority 120.

List of the AYES.

Anstey, T. C.
Archdall, Capt. M.
Arkwright, G.
Bankes, G.
Bennet, P.
Blackstone, W. S.
Blair, S.
Blakemore, R.
Boldero, H. G.
Bourke, R. S.
Bramston, T. W.
Brand, T.
Bremridge, R.
Brisco, M.
Brooke, Lord
Brown, H.
Burghley, Lord
Burroughes, H. N.

Cabbell, B. B.
Cholmeley, Sir M.
Christopher, R. A.
Cobbold, J. C.
Cochrane, A.D. R. W.B.
Cocks, T. S.
Cole, hon. H. A.
Coles, H. B.
Cotton, hon. W. H. S.
Cowan, C.
Disraeli, B.
Dod, J. W.
Dodd, G.
Duff, G. S.
Duncuft, J.
Dundas, G.
Du Pre, C. G.
East, Sir J. B.
Estcourt, J. B. B.
Farnham, E. B.
Farrer, J.
Floyer, J.
Fox, S. W. L.
Fuller, A. E.
Godson, R.
Gooch, E. S.
Gordon, Adm.
Goring, C.
Granby, Marq. of
Grogan, E.
Gwyn, H.
Hale, R. B.
Halsey, T. P.
Henley, J. W.
Herries, rt hon. J. C.
Hervey, Lord A.
Hildyard, R. C.
Hodgson, W. N.
Hood, Sir A.
Hornby, J.
Jolliffe, Sir W. G. H.
Ker, R.
Knightley, Sir C.
Knox, Col.
Law, hon. C. E.
Lennox, Lord H. G.
Leslie, C. P.
Lowther, H.
Lushington, C.
Mackenzie, W. F.
Mandeville, Visct.
Manners, Lord C. S.
Manners, Lord G.
Meux, Sir H.
Miles, W.
Moffatt, G.
Moody, C. A.
Muntz, G. F.
Napier, J.
Neeld, J.
Neeld, J.
Newport, Visct.
Newry and Morne, Visct.
Nugent, Lord
Osborne, R.
Ossulston, Lord
Palmer, R.
Palmer, R.
Perfect, R.
Plowden, W. H. C.
Prime, R.
Renton, J. C.
Repton, G. W. J.
Richards, R.
Rufford, F.
Sandars, G.
Scott, hon. F.
Seymer, H. K.
Shafto, R. D.
Shirley, E. J.
Smyth, J. G.
Smythe, hon. G.
Somerset, Capt.
Somerton, Visct.
Sotheron, T. H. S.
Spooner, R.
Stafford, A.
Stanley, E.
Stuart, H.
Stuart, J.
Sutton, J. H. M.
Taylor, T. E.
Thompson, Col.
Thompson, Ald.
Thompson, G.
Thornhill, G.
Trevor, hon. G. R.
Trollope, Sir J.
Turner, G. J.
Tyrell, Sir J. T.
Verner, Sir W.
Vyse, R. H. R. H.
Waddington, D.
Waddington, H. S.
Walpole, S. H.
Willoughby, Sir H.
Wodehouse, E.

TELLERS.
Beresford, W.
Newdegate, C. N.

List of the Noes.

Abdy, T. N.
Acland, Sir T. D.
Adair, R. A. S.
Alcock, T.
Anson, hon. Col.
Anson, Visct.
Armstrong, Sir A.
Armstrong, R. B.
Arundel and Surrey, Earl of
Ashley, Lord
Bagshaw, J.
Baines, M. T.
Baring, H. B.
Baring, rt. hn. Sir F. T.
Baring, T.
Barrington, Visct.
Barron, Sir H. W.
Bass, T.
Bellew, R. M.
Berkeley, hon. Capt.
Berkeley, C. L. G.
Bernard, Visct.
Birch, Sir T. B.
Blackall, S. W.
Blandford, Marq. of
Blewitt, R. J.
Bouverie, hon. E. P.
Boyle, hon. Col.
Bright, J.
Brockman, E. D.
Brotherton, J.
Brown, W.
Bruce, Lord E.
Bunbury, E. H.
Burke, Sir T. J.
Butler, P. S.
Buxton, Sir E. N.
Callaghan, D.
Campbell, hon. W. F.
Cardwell, E.
Carter, J. B.
Caulfield, J. M.
Cavendish, hon. C. C.
Cavendish, W. G.
Cayley, E. S.
Clay, Sir W.
Clements, hon. C. S.
Clerk, rt. hon. Sir G.
Cobden, R.
Cockburn, A. J. E.
Colebrooke, Sir T. E.
Corbally, M. E.
Cowper, hon. W. F.
Craig, W. G.
Crawford, W. S.
Crowder, R. B.
Dalrymple, Capt.
Dawson, hon. T. V.
Devereux, J. T.
Duncan, Visct.
Duncan, G.
Dundas, Adm.
Dunne, F. P.
Ebrington, Visct.
Ellice, rt. hon. E.
Ellis, J.
Elliot, hon. J. E.
Euston, Earl of
Evans, W.
Fagan, W.
Fergus, J.
Ferguson, Sir R. A.
Filmer, Sir E.
FitzPatrick, rt. hon. J.
Fitzwilliam, hon. G. W.
Foley, J. H. H.
Fordyce, A. D.
Forster, M.
Fox, R. M.
Freestun, Col.
Gibson, rt. hon. T. M.
Gladstone, rt. hon. W.
Glyn, G. C.
Goulburn, rt. hon. H.
Grace, O. D. J.
Graham, rt. hon. Sir J.
Grattan, H.
Greene, J.
Greene, T.
Grenfell, C. P.
Grenfell, C. W.
Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.
Grey, R. W.
Grosvenor, Earl
Hallyburton, Lord J. F.
Hamilton, J. H.
Hamilton, Lord C.
Harcourt, G. G.
Hardcastle, J. A.
Hastie, A.
Hastie, A.
Hawes, B.
Hay, Lord J.
Hayter, W. G.
Headlam, T. E.
Heneage, E.
Henry, A.
Herbert, H. A.
Heyworth, L.
Hobhouse, rt. hon. Sir J.
Hobhouse, T. B.
Hodges, T. L.
Hodges, T. T.
Hogg, Sir J. W.
Hollond, R.
Horsman, E.
Howard, Lord E.
Howard, hon. C. W. G.
Howard, hon. E. G. G.
Howard, Sir R.
Hume, J.
Inglis, Sir R. H.
Jackson, W.
Jervis, Sir J.
Keppel, hon. G. T.
Kershaw, J.
King, hon. P. J. L.
Labouchere, rt. hon. H.
Langston, J. H.
Lascelles, hon. W. S.
Lemon, Sir C.
Lewis, G. C.
Lincoln, Earl of
Lindsay, hon. Col.
Locke, J.
Lockhart, A. E.
Lockhart, W.
Macnaghten, Sir E.
Macnamara, Maj.
M'Cullagh, W. T.
M'Gregor, J.
Mahon, The O'Gorman
Mahon, Visct.
Maitland, T.
Marshall, W.
Martin, C. W.
Masterman, J.
Matheson, A.
Matheson, Col.
Maule, rt. hon. F.
Melgund, Visct.
Milner, W. M. E.
Milton, Visct.
Mitchell, T. A.
Monsell, W.
Moore, G. H.
Morgan, H. K. G.
Morris, D.
Mostyn, hon. E. M. L.
Mowatt, F.
Mulgrave, Earl of
Norreys, Lord
Nugent, Sir P.
O'Brien, J.
O'Brien, Sir L.
O'Brien, T.
O'Connell, J.
O'Connor, F.
O'Flaherty, A.
Ogle, S. C. H.
Owen, Sir J.
Paget, Lord A.
Paget, Lord C.

Palmerston, Visct.
Parker, J.
Patten, J. W.
Peel, rt, hon. Sir R.
Peel, Col.
Pennant, hon. Col.
Peto, S. M.
Pigott, F.
Pilkington, J.
Power, N.
Pusey, P.
Raphael, A.
Rawdon, Col.
Reynolds, J.
Ricardo, J. L.
Rice, E. R.
Rich, H.
Roche, E. B.
Romilly, Sir J.
Rumbold, C. E.
Russell, Lord J.
Russell, hon. E. S.
Russell, F. C. H.
Sadleir, J.
St. George, C.
Sandars, J.
Scholefield, W.
Scrope, G. P.
Scully, F.
Seaham, Visct.
Seymour, Sir H.
Seymour, Lord
Sheil, rt. hon. R. L.
Shelburne, Earl of
Sidney, Ald.
Simeon, J.
Slaney, R. A.
Smith, rt. hon. R. V.
Smith, M. T.
Smith, J. B.
Somerville, rt. hon. Sir W.
Spearman, H. J.
Stansfield, W. R. C.
Stanton, W. H.
Stuart, Lord D.
Sullivan, M.
Talfourd, Serj.
Tancred, H. W.
Tenison, E. K.
Thesiger, Sir F.
Thicknesse, R. A.
Thornely, T.
Towneley, J.
Townley, R. G.
Townshend, Capt.
Vane, Lord H.
Villiers, hon. C.
Vivian, J. H.
Wall, C. B.
Walter, J.
Ward, H. G.
Watkins, Col. L.
Wawn, J. T.
Wellesley, Lord C.
Westhead, J. P.
Williams, J.
Williamson, Sir H.
Wilson, J.
Wilson, M.
Wood, rt. hon. Sir C.
Wood, W. P.
Young, Sir J.

TELLERS.

Tufnell, H.
Hill, Lord M.

Mr. HUME said, that the Government were bound to come forward with some other measure to meet the distresses of Ireland, and to render the money given by this country really useful to her. As he did not think the grant good in principle, or likely to be of any service, he would take the sense of the House upon it.

Original question put. The Committee divided;—Ayes 220; Noes 143: Majority 77.

List of the Ayes.

Abdy, T. N.
Acland, Sir T. D.
Adair, R. A. S.
Anson, hon. Col.
Anson, Visct.
Archdall, Capt. M.
Armstrong, Sir A.
Armstrong, R. B.
Arundel and Surrey, Earl of
Ashley, Lord
Bagshaw, J.
Baines, M. T.
Baring, H. B.
Baring, rt. hon. Sir F. T.
Baring, T.
Barrington, Visct.
Barron, Sir H. W.
Bass, T.
Bellew, R. M.
Berkeley, hon. Capt.
Bernard, Visct.
Birch, Sir T. B.
Blackall, S. W.
Blandford, Marq. of
Bourke, R. S.
Boyle, hon. Col.
Brockman, E. D.
Brotherton, J.
Bunbury, E. H.
Burke, Sir T. J.
Butler, P. S.
Buxton, Sir E. N.
Callaghan, D.
Campbell, hon. W. F.
Cardwell, E.
Carter, J. B.
Caulfeild, J. M.
Cavendish, hon. C. C.
Cavendish, W. G.
Cayley, E. S.
Cholmeley, Sir M.
Clay, Sir W.
Clements, hon. C. S.
Clerk, rt. hon. Sir G.
Cockburn, A. J. E.
Coke, hon. E. K.
Cole, hon. H. A.
Colebrooke, Sir T. E.
Corbally, M. E.
Cowper, hon. W. F.
Craig, W. G.
Crowder, R. B.
Dalrymple, Capt.
Dawson, hon. T. V.
Devereux, J. T.
Dod, J. W.
Dundas, Adm.
Dunne, F. P.
Ebrington, Visct.
Ellice, rt. hon. E.
Ellis, J.
Elliot, hon. J. E.
Euston, Earl of
Evans, W.
Fagan, W.
Ferguson, Sir R. A.
Filmer, Sir E.
FitzPatrick, rt. hn. J. W.
Fitzwilliam, hon. G. W.
Foley, J. H. H.
Forster, M.
Fox, R. M.
Freestun, Col.
Gladstone, rt. hn. W. E.
Glyn, G. C.
Gordon, Adm.
Goulburn, rt. hon. H.
Grace, O. D. J.
Graham, rt. hon. Sir J.
Granby, Marq. of
Greene, J.
Greene, T.
Grey, rt, hon. Sir G.
Grey, R. W.
Grosvenor, Earl
Hamilton, J. H.
Hamilton, Lord C.
Harcourt, G. G.
Hawes, B.
Hay, Lord J.
Hayter, W. G.
Headlam, T. E.
Henley, J. W.
Herbert, H. A.
Herries, rt. hon. J. C.
Hobhouse, rt. hon. Sir J.
Hobhouse, T. B.
Hodges, T. L.
Hodges, T. T.
Hogg, Sir J. W.
Hollond, R.
Hood, Sir A.
Horsman, E.
Howard, Lord E.
Howard, hon. C. W. G.
Howard, hon. E. G. G.
Howard, Sir R.
Inglis, Sir R. H.
Jackson, W.
Jervis, Sir J.
Keppel, hon. G. T.
Labouchere, rt. hon. H.
Lascelles, hon. W. S.
Lemon, Sir C.
Lewis, G. C.
Lincoln, Earl of
Lindsay, hon. Col.
Locke, J.
Lockhart, A. E.
M'Cullagh, W. T.
M'Gregor, J.
Macnaghten, Sir E.
Macnamara, Maj.
Mahon, The O'Gorman
Mahon, Visct.
Maitland, T.
Marshall, W.
Martin, C. W.
Masterman, J.
Matheson, A.
Matheson, Col.
Maule, rt. hon. F.
Melgund, Visct.
Milner, W. M. E.
Milton, Visct.
Mitchell, T. A.
Moffatt, G.
Monsell, W.
Moore, G. H.
Morgan, H. K. G.
Mostyn, hon. E. M. L.
Mulgrave, Earl of
Napier, J.
Norreys, Lord
Nugent, Sir P.
O'Brien, J.
O'Brien, Sir L.
O'Brien, T.
O'Connell, J.
O'Connor, F.
O'Flaherty, A.
Ogle, S. C. H.
Ossulston, Lord
Owen, Sir J.
Paget, Lord A.
Paget, Lord C.
Palmerston, Visct.
Parker, J.
Patten, J. W.
Peel, rt. hon. Sir R.
Peel, Col.
Peto, S. M.
Power, N.
Pusey, P.
Raphael, A.
Rawdon, Col.
Reynolds, J.
Rice, E. R.
Rich, H.
Roche, E. B.
Romilly, Sir J.
Russell, Lord J.
Russell, hon. E. S.
Russell, F. C. H.
Sadleir, J.
St. George, C.
Sandars, G.
Sandars, J.
Scholefield, W.
Scrope, G. P.
Scully, F.
Seaham, Visct.
Seymour, Sir H.

Sheil, rt. hon. R. L.
Shelburne, Earl of
Simeon, J.
Slaney, R. A.
Smith, M. T.
Somerville, rt. hon. Sir W.
Spearman, H. J.
Stansfield, W. R. C.
Stanton, W. H.
Stuart, Lord D.
Sullivan, M.
Talfourd, Serj.
Tancred, H. W.
Taylor, T. E.
Tenison, E. K.
Thesiger, Sir F.
Thornely, T.
Towneley, J.
Townley, R. G.
Townshend, Capt.
Trevor, hon. G. R.
Vane, Lord H.
Villiers, hon. C.
Vivian, J. H.
Wall, C. B.
Walter, J.
Ward, H. G.
Watkins, Col. L.
Wellesley, Lord C.
Westhead, J. P.
Williamson, Sir H.
Wilson, J.
Wilson, M.
Wodehouse, E.
Wood, rt. hon. Sir C.
Wyvill, M.
Young, Sir J.

TELLERS.

Hill, Lord M.
Tufnell, H.

List of the NOES.

Adair, H. E.
Alcock, T.
Arkwright, G.
Bankes, G.
Bennet, P.
Beresford, W.
Berkeley, C. L. G.
Blackstone, W. S.
Blair, S.
Blakemore, R.
Blewitt, R. J.
Boldero, H. G.
Bouverie, hon. E. P.
Bramston, T. W.
Brand, T.
Bremridge, R.
Bright, J.
Brisco, M.
Brooke, Lord
Brown, H.
Brown, W.
Bruce, Lord E.
Burghley, Lord
Burroughes, H. N.
Cabbell, B. B.
Christopher, R. A.
Christy, S.
Cobbold, J. C.
Cobden, R.
Cochrane, A. D. R. W. B.
Cocks, T. S.
Coles, H. B.
Cowan, C.
Crawford, W. S.
Disraeli, B.
Dodd, G.
Duff, G. S.
Duncan, Visct.
Duncan, G.
Duncuft, J.
Dundas, G.
Du Pre, C. G.
East, Sir J. B.
Estcourt, J. B. B.
Farnham, E. B.
Farrer, J.
Fergus, J.
Floyer, J.
Fordyce, A. D.
Fox, S. W. L.
Fuller, A. E.
Gaskell, J. M.
Gibson, rt. hon. T. M.
Godson, R.
Gooch, E. S.
Goring, C.
Grenfell, C. P.
Grenfell, C. W.
Gwyn, H.
Hallyburton, Lord J. F.
Halsey, T. P.
Hardcastle, J. A.
Hastie, A.
Hastie, A.
Heneage, E.
Henry, A.
Hervey, Lord A.
Hildyard, R. C.
Hodgson, W. N.
Hornby, J.
Jolliffe, Sir W. G. H.
Ker, R.
Kershaw, J.
King, hon. P. J. L.
Knightley, Sir C.
Knox, Col.
Langston, J. H.
Law, hon. C. E.
Leslie, C. P.
Lockhart, W.
Lowther, H.
Lushington, C.
Mackenzie, W. F.
Mandeville, Visct.
Manners, Lord C. S.
Meux, Sir H.
Miles, W.
Moody, C. A.
Morris, D.
Mowatt, F.
Muntz, G. F.
Neeld, J.
Neeld, J.
Newdegate, C. N.
Newport, Visct.
Newry and Morne, Visct.
Nugent, Lord
Osborne, R.
Palmer, R.
Palmer, R.
Pilkington, J.
Plowden, W. H. C.
Powlett, Lord W.
Prime, R.
Renton, J. C.
Ricardo, J. L.
Ricardo, O.
Richards, R.
Rufford, F.
Scott, hon. F.
Seymour, Lord
Shafto, R. D.
Shirley, E. J.
Sibthorp, Col.
Sidney, Ald.
Smith, rt. hon. R.
Smith, J. B.
Smyth, J. G.
Smythe, hon. G.
Somerset, Capt.
Sotheron, T. H. S.
Spooner, R.
Stanley, E.
Stuart, H.
Stuart, J.
Sutton, J. H. M.
Thicknesse, R. A.
Thompson, Col.
Thompson, Ald.
Thompson, G.
Trollope, Sir J.
Turner, G. J.
Tyrell, Sir J. T.
Verner, Sir W.
Vyse, R. H. R. H.
Waddington, D.
Waddington, H. S.
Walpole, S. H.
Walsh, Sir J. B.
Wawn, J. T.
Williams, J.
Willoughby, Sir H.
Wood, W. P.

TELLERS.

Heyworth, L.
Hume, J.

Resolution to be reported.

House resumed.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE IRISH POOR LAW.

On Motion of SIR W. SOMERVILLE, Order (8th February), "That the Committee do consist of twenty-one Members," read and discharged.

SIR W. SOMERVILLE moved, that the Select Committee on the Irish Poor Law do consist of twenty-six Members, and that the following Members be added thereto:—The Earl of Lincoln, Sir Lucius O'Brien, and Mr. Moore.

Motion made that Mr. Bright's name be added to the Committee,

CAPTAIN TAYLOR said, as originally constituted, there was too great a preponderance of borough Members upon it; but above all men, he did not see why the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Bright) should be added. What he (Captain Taylor) wanted was a fair, and at the same time an effective Committee; but he had yet to learn why the Manchester school should be allowed to send its delegates to this already large Committee, and perhaps delay its proceedings by pressing the marvellous doctrines which were heard from that quarter, upon all subjects and upon all occasions. He, therefore, objected altogether to Mr. Bright, and with the less hesitation, because he had a distinct and an unhappy recollection of the hon. Member having served as a selected Member upon a former Committee. That Committee certainly sat upon a different question; but having watched the proceedings of it, he now looked with jealousy and no small fear at the hon. Member for Manchester being commissioned to deal with interests for which he (Captain Taylor) had a great affection, but with which he did not think it possible the hon. Gentleman could in any manner be identified. The hon. Member concluded by proposing to substitute the name of the hon. Member for Radnorshire (Sir J. Walsh) in lieu of Mr. Bright.

Mr. MILNER GIBSON supported the nomination of Mr. Bright, and called the attention of the House to the enormous interest which Manchester and Lancashire had in the proper administration of the poor-law in Ireland. A very large proportion of the poor's-rates both of Manchester and Liverpool had arisen from the enormous amount of Irish pauperism thrown into those towns. He could not exactly call to recollection to what previous Committee the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite (Captain Taylor) alluded in his objection to his hon. Colleague; but he (Mr. M. Gibson) must express his conviction, that if his hon. Friend were selected, he would do his duty faithfully.

Sir W. VERNER said, that after what had taken place, it was not his intention to offer any opposition to the composition of the Committee, although he might have taken exception at the way in which Ulster was represented on it. The addition of Members to those originally proposed was a change, but he did not consider it an improvement.

Lord C. HAMILTON had no personal objection to the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Bright) serving upon this Committee. He admitted the great interest which Lancashire had in this question; but he contended that it would be adequately represented by the hon. Member for Rochdale (Mr. S. Crawford). He objected to the number of English borough Members which had been selected. Out of eight English Members upon the Committee as originally constituted, six represented boroughs. Now, he submitted that, as this inquiry involved questions of poor-rates, some county Members ought to be consulted. If the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Bright) were appointed to serve, there would then be nine English Members upon the Committee, of which seven represented boroughs. He appealed to the House whether this was not a very unusual proportion. He recommended the Government to add to the Committee some Gentlemen representing a large agricultural county.

Mr. F. MAULE said, that allusion had been made to the conduct of the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Bright) on another Committee. The hon. and gallant Member opposite (Captain Taylor) had objected to the hon. Member for Manchester being placed on the Committee, because after having watched his conduct on another Committee, the hon. Gentleman said he felt no confidence in the hon. Member for Manchester with regard to the Committee proposed. He believed the Committee to which the hon. Gentleman (Captain Taylor) referred, was the Dublin Election Committee. Now, this was the first occasion on which the character and honour of a Member of any Election Committee, appointed during the time he (Mr. F. Maule) had had the honour of being chairman of the Committee of Selection, had been called in question. And any charge of that sort was a serious one, when it was recollected that a Member of an Election Committee did not proceed to discharge his duty until he took an oath, or made an affirmation, that he would discharge his duty honestly and conscientiously. The present was not the time for calling in question the conduct of any Member while serving on an Election Committee. If the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Bright) had been guilty of a breach of his affirmation, there was a proper time for calling him to account. But so far from that being the case, he believed on every occasion involving any proposal, the decision of the Committee was nearly unanimous. The hon. Member for Manchester had been placed on the Committee referred to with the unanimous consent of the Committee of Selection; and he (Mr. F. Maule) believed that the hon. Member was as incapable of doing anything contrary to his affirmation as any other Gentleman contrary to his oath.

Mr. BATESON, as an Irish Member, would state the reason which induced him to think that in Ireland this Committee would be considered "a mockery, a delusion, and a snare." In the first place, it was calculated to bolster up all the evils and abuses of the present system of poor-law, for there were placed upon it one or two ex-poor-law officials—men wedded to the present system, who looked upon their bantling with true fatherly affection, however worthless it turned out. And now, by way of mending the matter, it was proposed to add the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Bright). Why, if the hon. Gentleman possessed such peculiar qualifications, how was it he had not been called upon in the first instance? Was it that the light of the hon. Gentleman had hitherto been hid under a bushel, that Her Majesty's Government now, at the eleventh hour, declared his peculiar qualifications for the inquiry? Or was it that the knowledge and experience of the hon. Member for Manchester in Irish affairs were so great that he could assist the Committee to remedies for evils and abuses? He (Mr. Bateson) was not aware of the hon. Gentleman having yet developed any extraordinary experience in Irish affairs; but if he had any, let him give the Committee the benefit of it by being examined as a witness, rather than permit his views to be diluted with those of twenty-six other Members. But it had been whispered that the hon. Gentleman and several of his friends had made extensive arrangements for the purchase of landed property in Ireland. That, he supposed, was the reason for his selection. But, independently of all this, he regretted to say that he was unable to give the hon. Gentleman credit for possessing a fair, impartial, and unprejudiced mind. He could not forget that upon several occasions, when the hon. Member had addressed the House with regard to Ireland, he had shown most violent, most virulent, and most vindictive feelings towards the landed interest of that country. He (Mr. Bateson) would read one short extract from one of his speeches in *Hansard*. The hon. Gentleman said—

> "With regard to Ireland, you have everything Protestant—a Protestant clergy, which monopolises the places and emoluments of the Protestant Church; a Protestant magistracy before whom a destitute peasant could not hope for justice. They had not only a Protestant, but an exterminating landlord, and a Protestant soldiery, who, at the beck of a Protestant priest, had butchered a Catholic peasant in the presence of his widowed mother."

He wished to know whether the Government thought that the report of the Committee would be more valuable were there added to it the name of a Gentleman holding the opinions of the hon. Member for Manchester? But why had not his name been originally proposed? The fact was that they all knew how his nomination originated. They were not so blind as not to see that it was a sop thrown by Government to a party whom they could not satisfy, and whom they dared not offend.

Sir G. GREY said, that there was only one portion of the speech of the hon. Member (Mr. Bateson), to which he would allude. The hon. Member had stated, amongst other reasons for objecting to the nomination of the hon. Member for Manchester, that he had heard it whispered that the hon. Member for Manchester was about to invest capital in Ireland. Now, if this were the case—and he earnestly hoped it was—he thought the fact constituted a very good reason for placing the hon. Gentleman on the Committee. What the hon. Gentleman intended to do in Ireland he (Sir G. Grey) did not know; but there were many amongst that society with which the hon. Gentleman was connected, who had displayed, he (Sir G. Grey) could hardly say more than their ordinary benevolence—but who had displayed the whole of that customary benevolence in relieving the late distresses in Ireland, not only by great sacrifices of time and money, but by the judicious application of capital to develop the resources of the country. The society in question constituted, indeed, a body which every Irishman was, in his opinion, bound, far from depreciating, to speak of with that gratitude and respect to which it was so well entitled.

Mr. BATESON protested against the uncalled-for lecture which the right hon. Baronet (Sir G. Grey) had read him. He (Mr. Bateson) did not say a single word against the members of the society to which the hon. Member for Manchester belonged; and he entertained for them as deep a respect as the right hon. Baronet himself could feel.

Mr. HENRY observed that he had suggested that the name of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Manchester (Mr. Bright) should be placed upon the Committee, not only because he represented a community which suffered much from the immigration of Irish vagrants, but because he (Mr. Henry) had heard the hon. Gentleman make several remarkable speeches on Irish subjects; and also on account of his being connected with that religious society whose efforts had been productive of so much good during the late urgent season of distress in Ireland.

Mr. SCULLY contended that agricultural Ireland was not fairly or adequately represented in the Committee. He found, from consulting the map, that half of the Irish counties would be unrepresented by the proposed constitution of the Committee.

Colonel DUNNE was of opinion that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Manchester (Mr. Bright), was perfectly fitted, both by talents and integrity, to be placed upon the Committee; but his interests were not identified with those of Ireland, while the agricultural districts of that country would not be sufficiently represented—and he should vote for the Amendment.

Mr. HUME observed, that this was an English as well as an Irish question. He could not see, therefore, why the hon. Gentlemen to serve should be nominated exclusively from the body of Irish Members. He might take this opportunity of remarking, that during the course of a pretty long experience in Parliament, he had never before heard personal motives attributed to an hon. Gentleman in the discharge of his public duties. He must add that the hon. and gallant Member (Mr. Bateson) who had made the charge, had shown great neglect of his duty, in not having brought any accusation against the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Bright) which he had to adduce, at the time the alleged misconduct took place, and while the subject was fresh in the minds of the House. He hoped that no division would take place on the present occasion.

Mr. REYNOLDS would not have taken any part in the debate had he not perceived that it was assuming a very serious aspect. There appeared to him to have been a military attack made on a Gentleman belonging to the Society of Friends. Already had that Gentleman been attacked by three Colonels and a Captain. There was his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Portarlington, a Colonel (Colonel Dunne); the hon. and gallant Member for the county of Dublin, ditto; the hon. and gallant Member for Armagh (Colonel Verner); and the hon. and gallant Member for the county of Londonderry, a captain (Mr. Bateson)— [Mr. Bateson: I am no captain.] He believed that, although the hon. Member had parted with his military rank, it still belonged to him. It had been said, "Once a priest, for ever a priest;"—once a lieutenant, for ever a captain. He would not, therefore, willingly rob the hon. Member of a title to which he had still a clear right. Now, it was quite evident that the attack which had been made on the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Bright) was prepared; the reading of the extract from *Hansard* proved that it was not the result of the impulse of the moment, but had been well concocted. He would not say it had been concocted at a club which should be nameless; but he was afraid that the charge made against the hon. Member for Manchester might in one sense be attributed to himself. It was not because the hon. Member was unfit to discharge the duties which would be imposed on him that the hon. Gentleman was objected to. It was because he had happened to sit on his (Mr. Reynolds's) Committee. It was the old story of the grey mare, which was so familiar to every man's ears. The story was this:—A countryman of his (Mr. Reynolds) was indicted at the assizes of Tralee for a certain offence—a felony. It was proved clearly that he was not guilty of the crime imputed to him, notwithstanding which, the jury, without leaving the box, found him guilty. The judge was shocked at the verdict, and he said, "Gentlemen, it has been clearly proved that this man is innocent." "Yes," replied the foreman, "it has been; he is innocent of the crime laid to his charge, but he stole my grey mare last Christmas." So also the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Bright) was innocent of the charges brought against him; but he happened not to have put him (Mr. Reynolds) out, and Mr. Gregory in; therefore he was totally unfit to be upon this Poor Law Committee. Now he (Mr. Reynolds) knew something about his fellow-countrymen, and he could safely assure the House that amongst the 553 British Members composing it there was not one man so popular in Ireland as was the hon. Member for Manchester. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Notwithstanding that exclamation, he would repeat the assertion. The hon. Member was regarded in Ireland as the friend of the poor, and as a man pleading for popular liberty. No doubt he had dealt out some hard blows against landlords; but would any man say that some landlords did not deserve them? It was, however, partly because the hon. Member knew how to discriminate between the good and the bad, that he (Mr. Reynolds) wished to see him on the Committee. His appointment would be a just compliment to the Society of Friends; for amongst the useful societies of Ireland, particularly in connexion with distress, he believed the most useful was that to which the hon. Member belonged.

Viscount BERNARD deeply regretted that Her Majesty's Government had not themselves proposed a measure on the subject of the Irish Poor Law. The mere appointment of a Committee of Inquiry left the question in uncertainty.

Question put, "That Mr. Bright be one other Member of the said Committee."

The House divided:—Ayes 129; Noes 74: Majority 55.

List of the Ayes.

Adair, H. E.
Adair, R. A. S.
Arundel and Surrey, Earl of
Bagshaw, J.
Baines, M. T.
Baring, rt. hn. Sir F. T.
Bass, T.
Bellew, R. M.
Berkeley, C. L. G.
Bernal, R.
Blewitt, R. J.
Bouverie, hon. E. P.
Boyle, hon. Col.
Brotherton, J.
Brown, W.
Bruce, Lord E.
Bunbury, E. H.
Carter, J. B.
Clements, hon. C. S.
Cobden, R.
Craig, W. G.
Crowder, R. B.
Devereux, J. T.
Duncan, G.
Duncuft, J.
Dundas, Adm.
Ebrington, Visct.
Ellis, J.
Elliot, hon. J. E.
Evans, W.
Fagan, W.
Farrer, J.
Ferguson, Sir R. A.
Foley, J. H. H.
Fordyce, A. D.
Fox, R. M.
Freestun, Col.
Graham, rt. hon. Sir J.
Greene, J.
Greene, T.
Grenfell, C. P.
Grenfell, C. W.
Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.
Grey, R. W.
Hardcastle, J. A.
Hastie, A.
Hastie, A.
Hawes, B.
Hay, Lord J.
Hayter, W. G.
Headlam, T. E.
Heneage, E.
Heyworth, L.
Hill, Lord M.
Hobhouse, T. B.
Hodges, T. L.
Horsman, E.
Howard, Lord E.
Howard, hon. C. W. G.
Howard, hon. E. G. G.
Hume, J.
Jackson, W.
Jervis, Sir J.
Keppel, hon. G. T.
Kershaw, J.
King, hon. P. J. L.
Labouchere, rt. hon. H.
Lincoln, Earl of
Locke, J.
Lockhart, A. E.
M‘Cullagh, W. T.
M‘Gregor, J.
Mahon, The O'Gorman
Maitland, T.
Martin, C. W.
Maule, rt hon. F.
Melgund, Visct.
Mitchell, T. A.
Moffatt, G.
Monsell, W.
Morgan, H. K. G.
Morris, D.
Mostyn, hon. E. M. L.
Mulgrave, Earl of
O'Brien, J.
Ogle, S. C. H.
Osborne, R.
Paget, Lord A.
Palmerston, Visct.
Parker, J.
Peel, rt. hon. Sir R.
Peel, Col.
Peto, S. M.
Pilkington, J.
Power, N.
Rawdon, Col.
Reynolds, J.
Ricardo, O.
Rich, H.
Romilly, Sir J.
Russell, hon. E. S.
Russell, F. C. H.
Scrope, G. P.
Sheil, rt. hon. R. L.
Simeon, J.
Smith, J. B.
Somerville, rt. hn. Sir W.
Spearman, H. J.
Stafford, A.
Stanton, W. H.
Stuart, Lord D.
Sullivan, M.
Talfourd, Serj.
Tenison, E. K.
Thompson, Col.
Thompson, G.
Thornely, T.
Townshend, Capt.
Tufnell, H.
Villiers, hon. C.
Walter, J.
Ward, H. G.
Wawn, J. T.
Williams, J.
Wilson, J.
Wilson, M.
Wood, rt. hon. Sir C.
Wyvill, M.
Young, Sir J.

TELLERS.

Gibson, rt. hon. T. M.
Henry, A.

List of the Noes.

Archdall, Capt.
Barrington, Visct.
Bennet, P.
Beresford, W.
Bernard, Visct.
Blackstone, W. S.
Boldero, H. G.
Bourke, R. S.
Brooke, Lord
Burghley, Lord
Burke, Sir T. J.
Butler, P. S.
Cobbold, J. C.
Cocks, T. S.
Cole, hon. H. A.
Cotton, hon. W. H. S.
Dawson, hon. T. V.
Dod, J. W.
Dodd, G.
Dunne, F. P.
East, Sir J. B.
Floyer, J.
Fox, S. W. L.
Fuller, A. E.
Goring, C.
Grace, O. D. J.
Grogan, E.
Gwyn, H.
Halsey, T. P.
Hamilton, J. H.
Hamilton, Lord C.
Herbert, H. A.
Hervey, Lord A.
Hildyard, R. C.
Hodgson, W. N.
Hood, Sir A.
Jolliffe, Sir W. G. H.
Knightley, Sir C.
Law, hon. C. E.
Lennox, Lord H. G.
Leslie, C. P.
Lindsay, hon. Col.
Lockhart, W.
Lowther, H.
Mackenzie, W. F.
Macnamara, Maj.
Mandeville, Visct.
Manners, Lord C. S.
Manners, Lord G.
Meux, Sir H.
Moore, G. H.
Napier, J.
Newdegate, C. N.
Newport, Visct.
Newry and Morne, Visct.
Nugent, Sir P.
Renton, J. C.
Rufford, F.
St. George, C.
Sandars, J.
Scully, F.
Seaham, Visct.
Smith, M. T.
Somerset, Capt.
Spooner, R.
Stuart, J.
Trevor, hon. G. R.
Trollope, Sir J.
Tyrell, Sir J. T.
Verner, Sir W.
Vyse, R. H. R. H.
Waddington, H. S.
Walsh, Sir J. B.
Willoughby, Sir H.

TELLERS.

Bateson, T.
Taylor, T. E.

The name of Mr. Bright was then added to the Committee; and also the name of Mr. Grace.

ARMY AND ORDNANCE EXPENDITURE.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER moved the appointment of the following Select Committee on the Army and Ordnance:—Lord Seymour, Mr. Secretary at War (Mr. Fox Maule), Mr. Hume, Marquess of Granby, Mr. Walter, Sir W. Molesworth, Lord Charles Wellesley, Sir James Graham, Mr. William Miles, Mr. Cobden, Mr. Sidney Herbert, Mr. John Greene, Mr. Edward Ellice, Mr. Vernon Smith, and Mr. Bankes.

Mr. B. OSBORNE said, he wished to move the addition of the following names to the Committee:—General Sir De Lacy Evans, Colonel Lindsay, and Colonel Dunne.

Mr. SPEAKER said, the hon. Gentleman should give notice of that Motion for to-morrow.

Mr. B. OSBORNE: But it is now to-morrow, Sir (it was at that time near two o'clock).

Colonel PEEL said he felt bound to complain of the absence of any officer connected with the Ordnance department from the Committee, although that department had of late been the subject of repeated attacks. He should suggest that his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Chippenham (Captain Boldero) should be added to the Committee.

Captain BOLDERO also complained that there was not a single individual connected with the Ordnance department on the Committee. He thought that that omission was the more objectionable, as the public press had of late contained many attacks on that branch of the public service, and as these attacks were calculated to mislead the public. There was, in fact, a dead-set made against the Ordnance department. He proposed that the name of the Clerk of the Ordnance (Colonel Anson) should be added to the Committee.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER said, that he merely proposed, with a few necessary exceptions, the reappointment of the Committee of last Session. He believed it was not advisable to overload the Committee with professional men, who would be better employed in giving their evidence as witnesses.

Mr. NEWDEGATE hoped, that no deference to what happened to be the number selected last year would constrain the right hon. Baronet the Chancellor of the Exchequer to exclude every Member connected with the Ordnance from the Committee. Many attacks had been made upon the Ordnance department since last year; and, besides, the proposed investigation involved science and details that could not be properly judged of by those who had no experience of them.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER said, that if the Committee would proceed with its inquiry into the Army, he could ascertain whether it would be desirable to add to it some Gentleman connected with the Ordnance before the inquiry into that branch of the public service was commenced.

The appointment of the Committee was then agreed to.

House adjourned at Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, February 13, 1849.

Minutes.] Petitions Presented. From Members of the Protestant Church, against the present System of Government Grants for Education in Ireland.—From Stourbridge, for the Adoption of such Measures as shall secure Civil and Religious Liberty to Clergymen seceding from the Established Church.—From Leeds, in favour of referring all International Differences to Arbitration by Neutral Powers.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, February 13, 1849.

Minutes.] New Member Sworn.—For Leominster, Frederick Peel, Esq.

Public Bills.—1° Bribery at Elections; Public Roads.

DUBLIN IMPROVEMENT BILL.

Mr. GROGAN moved the Second Reading of the Dublin Consolidation, Improvement, Waterworks, and Sewers Bill.

Mr. REYNOLDS said, he felt bound, in conformity with the wishes of a large majority of his constituents, to oppose the Motion. Certain facts had been put forward, and circulated in a printed form, among the Members of the House, in support of this Bill; but they were, as he was prepared to show, not facts at all, but the reverse of facts. One of the assertions in this paper was, that none of the local boards were opposed to the Bill, except the Dublin corporation; but so far from that being the case, he held in his hand three petitions against the Bill. One of those was from the Wide-street Commissioners; another was from the Chamber of Commerce; and the other was from the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the city of Dublin. This Bill proposed to abolish four district boards, and to lodge their powers in a new board, to consist of the Lord Mayor, the High Sheriff, the chairman of the two boards of guardians for the city, the president of the Chamber of Commerce, the two representatives in Parliament of the city, and two commissioners to be named by the Lord Lieutenant. But he believed that not one of the gentlemen named would consent to serve, and that the Lord Lieutenant had not been consulted on the matter at all. The effect of the 60th clause would be to give Mr. Jackson, who was the author of this Bill, the costs, not only of the present Bill, but of three former similar Bills that had all been thrown out. The 33rd clause enacted that it should be lawful for the Treasury to advance a sum not exceeding 200,000*l.* to the commissioners; and he believed that this clause would have the effect of upsetting the entire Bill, as one of the standing orders of the House provided that the House would not proceed on any petition, Motion, or Bill, for granting any money owing to the Crown, but on a Committee of the whole House. He objected to the

Bill, because it handed over the fiscal rights of the citizens of Dublin to an irresponsible body, and thus applied a rule to Ireland contrary to that under which the municipal corporations in this country existed. He begged to move that the Bill be postponed for a fortnight, in order that the Speaker might have an opportunity of deciding on the objection which he had raised on the 33rd clause.

Mr. BROTHERTON seconded the Amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER said, it would be impossible for him to answer the question without having the Bill before him, as much necessarily depended upon the wording of the clause in question. He would look at it, however, and would be able to give an answer to-morrow.

Mr. REYNOLDS said, on consulting with his hon. Friends near him, he begged to ask leave to withdraw his Amendment, in order to move that the second reading be postponed until that day six months.

The Amendment was then, by leave, withdrawn, when

Mr. REYNOLDS moved that the Bill be read a second time that day six months. He wished to take that opportunity of asking his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland, whether the sanction of Her Majesty's Government had been given to this Bill?

Mr. GROGAN said, he should not persevere in the second reading of this Bill, unless under the full conviction that it was absolutely necessary for the city of Dublin. The object of the Bill was to get rid of the many conflicting interests now existing in Dublin, and place the various powers held by them under one board. The corporation of Dublin had already failed in their attempt to pass a similar Bill in their own favour; and he believed it would be admitted that all the respectable classes in the city were unanimous in their opposition to any attempt to confer new powers on the corporation. The hon. Gentleman appeared to have got hold of a wrong document, as the words were "but one of the local boards," instead of "not one of the local boards opposed the Bill."

Sir W. SOMERVILLE said, his hon. Friend (Mr. Grogan) had not at all overstated the case when he said that the fiscal and other municipal regulations of Dublin required adjustment and improval. Several attempts had been made to introduce a better state of things; but, owing to the strong party animosities which prevailed on the subject, they had been attended with no success. He had himself indulged in a hope last year that he had succeeded in reconciling the parties, but he was disappointed. His belief was, that if the House sanctioned the second reading of this Bill, and permitted it to go before a Committee, they would throw an obstacle in the way of the final settlement of the question. He had received a petition against the Bill from the Chamber of Commerce in Dublin, which, as was well known, represented the opinions of a highly respectable and numerous class of the citizens. The Grand Jury was against the Bill, and all those whom it was proposed to name as commissioners were against it, and the Government had never given any sanction to it, so that he did not think it was too much to say that the Bill had been presented to the House under most disadvantageous circumstances. He believed the only effect of going into Committee on the Bill would be, to subject the parties to unnecessary costs, and, consequently, to increase the ill-will which prevailed upon the subject.

Mr. HUME said, that after the extraordinary admission of the right hon. Baronet (Sir W. Somerville), he thought the House had a right to call for an undertaking from the Government that a measure which they could force upon all parties should be introduced without delay to remedy those evils.

The Earl of LINCOLN expressed his great regret at the course which the right hon. Baronet (Sir W. Somerville) had thought it to be his duty to take on this question, more especially in the absence of any such pledge as that which the hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume) had called for. He (the Earl of Lincoln) had, since the period of his connexion with Ireland, taken a deep interest in the sanitary improvement of Dublin, as well as of the country generally, and from all the facts that had reached his knowledge, he doubted whether any large town in the empire was so much in want of a measure of this kind as Dublin. The right hon. Gentleman had alluded to the fact that on more than one occasion his predecessors in office, as well as himself, had endeavoured to bring those opposing parties to some understanding upon this subject; and the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had, he believed, more particularly exerted himself with that view, but without success. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir W. Somerville) now, however, merely held out a hope that, if this Bill were rejected, Her Majesty's Government might be able to bring the parties to terms; but when was he likely to do so? Surely not in the course of the present Session; and were they to throw over all measures for the sanitary improvement of Dublin for another Session, merely in the hope that these boards, who were now represented to be in deadly hostility to each other, might become reconciled before next year—a hope that had been already repeatedly frustrated. The House had now before them the means of legislating for Dublin in a fair and impartial manner, totally irrespective of both parties; and, for his own part, he might be permitted here to observe, that he stood there totally unbiassed towards either. He had had no communication with any of the parties connected with this Bill, and had not had any conversation with his hon. Friend (Mr. Grogan) respecting it up to that moment. They had two Bills before them at present on this subject, the second having been introduced by the party who opposed the present Bill, and being nearly the same as that which had been rejected two years ago, and also by the Committee of last year. He wished to impress this matter on the attention of the right hon. Baronet the Secretary of State for the Home Department. He was strongly of opinion that it ought not to be considered as a mere private Bill, but as a question of national importance, and one to be taken up by Her Majesty's Government. Surely the Government, if they could not bring the parties to an understanding, could enforce a measure that would secure the general interest upon them. If this Bill passed the second reading, it would go before the same Committee upstairs to which the other Bill would be referred, and, by the rules of the House, they would then have a Committee of five Gentlemen, selected for their intelligence and impartiality, and having no local connexion with Dublin, to consider the whole question, assisted as they would be by the two Members for the city of Dublin, one of whom would be appointed on behalf of each Bill. That Committee would be enabled to reject both Bills, or else to incorporate the provisions of one Bill with those of the other; and even if this Committee passed the Bill now before the House in its present form, it would be still competent for the right hon. Baronet (Sir W. Somerville) to move its rejection at a future stage, if any better plan should occur to the Government as a substitute for it. By refusing to sanction the second reading now, they would, on the other hand, necessarily ensure the postponement of all legislation upon the subject for another year. All he asked was, that the Government should permit this Bill to be read a second time, and let it go before an impartial tribunal, when, if a satisfactory adjustment could not be made, he would be as ready to vote for its rejection as the right hon. Baronet himself.

SIR W. SOMERVILLE said, there was a great deal in what the noble Earl had said. His only reason for suggesting the course he had done was, that the Lord Lieutenant had a few days ago received a deputation upon this subject, and he expressed to them the opinion that this Bill would impede rather than promote a satisfactory adjustment of the question. It was on that ground he had acted, and he would now suggest to the noble Earl and to the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Grogan), who had charge of the measure, whether it would not be possible to postpone this Bill till he could receive fresh instructions from Dublin. If there was another Bill before the House, it was certainly advisable that the Bills should be considered together.

MR. BROTHERTON said, this suggestion placed them in an awkward predicament, because it had been brought under the notice of the House, that this Bill was an infringement of their Standing Orders.

MR. W. PATTEN suggested, that instead of postponing the Bill, the debate should be adjourned till that day fortnight.

ALDERMAN O'BRIEN said, that all the respectable citizens of Dublin were opposed to the Bill. No greater injury could be inflicted on that city than its passing,

MR. REYNOLDS was opposed to the adjournment of the debate. If they consented to postpone this measure, they entailed very heavy expenses on the opponents of the Bill. As to the hon. Members for Montrose (Mr. Hume) and Salford (Mr. Brotherton), although he entertained great respect for their opinions, he dissented from their opinions as applied to any of the institutions in Dublin, with which they were not connected or acquainted.

SIR W. SOMERVILLE appealed to

the hon. Member to consent to the postponement, as it was evidently the general wish of the House.

Debate adjourned.

THE KAFFIR WAR.

Mr. VERNON SMITH wished to ask a question of the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies. In the course of last Session he had stated, in reply to a question, that Sir Henry Pottinger had sent home a report, after he left the Cape of Good Hope, concerning the expenses of the Kaffir war, and the expenses of the colony. He then stated that the report had been referred to the Audit Office; and he (Mr. Vernon Smith) wished to know whether any report had been received from the Audit Office since the report of Sir Henry Pottinger?

Mr. HAWES said, that the report had been received; but he was not yet in a condition to state when it would be in the hands of the Members. It was a very complicated report, and a very laborious inquiry.

RAILWAYS—INDIA.

Viscount MAHON wished to ask a question of the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Control. There was a great anxiety at present pervading the public mind with regard to railways in India, especially after the explanations which he understood had taken place by the Indian Government. He wished to ask the right hon. Baronet what was the present state of that question, and what prospect there was of a portion, at least, of our Indian empire enjoying the advantage of railways?

Sir J. HOBHOUSE said, that negotiations were at present going on between certain railway companies and the Indian Government. Whilst those negotiations were going on, the noble Viscount would perceive that no good end would be answered by his explanation of the terms which the one party was prepared to propose, and the other to accept. But the moment he became acquainted with the result, if the noble Viscount would ask him the question again, he would have no hesitation in answering.

Mr. BRIGHT wished to ask another question upon this subject. He wished to know whether the Indian Government had come to the determination not to make these railways itself, but to have them made by private companies?

Sir J. HOBHOUSE said, the Indian Government had come to no such determination. The real state of the case was this—at present they proposed that these undertakings should be carried on by private companies; but the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Bright) might rest assured that the Indian Government had come to no determination, if the work should not be done by private companies, not to undertake it themselves.

THE PUNJAUB.

Mr. G. THOMPSON wished to ask the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Control when he would be prepared to present to the House the papers relating to the state of affairs in the Punjaub, and to the recent outbreak in that country?

Sir J. HOBHOUSE said, that, as at present advised, he had no papers to present connected with the war in the Punjaub.

SICILY.

Mr. URQUHART asked the noble Viscount the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether the documents connected with the recent transactions in Sicily, which have already been published in the newspapers, would be laid on the table of the House?

Viscount PALMERSTON said, there was an inconvenience to the public service in introducing into the papers of that House what had already appeared in the newspapers.

FISHERIES (IRELAND).

Mr. CHISHOLM ANSTEY rose to move—

> "For a Select Committee to inquire into the present state of the Inland Fisheries and Navigation of Ireland, and the obstructions which hinder the enjoyment of the same, and the best means of removing such obstructions; and to report their opinion thereupon to the House."

He said, that when, late last Session, the right hon. Baronet the Secretary for Ireland brought in a Bill, which passed into a law, for the amendment of the Irish fisheries, he intimated his intention, at an early period of the present Session, to bring this question before the House. The Bill of the right hon. Baronet (Sir W. Somerville), he admitted, effected several amendments, especially one which allowed parties who lived above the tidal move of a river to take fish for a limited period after close time had taken place with regard to those who lived below. Still he thought there was much room for the present Motion. And here he would address himself to those English Gentlemen who might, perhaps, have adopted the opinion of Sir C. Trevelyan in these matters. That gentleman stated, when examined before the Committee on the Miscellaneous Estimates, that Government was obliged to take charge of many duties in Ireland which in England and Scotland were usually discharged by private gentlemen; he instanced this very case of the Irish fisheries. But he (Mr. C. Anstey) would show that the cases were totally different. Generally in England, he believed universally in Scotland, the fisheries were private property, and in legal phraseology they were termed "several fisheries," and were therefore very properly left to the management of their owners. But the state of the law in Ireland—and he had taken some pains to inform himself of the fact—was very different. There was scarcely a fishery in Ireland which was a private property, or a "several fishery." The fisheries in every navigable river, as far up as the smallest skiff could be navigated, were as free to the public as the waters of the ocean into which they ran, and he (Mr. C. Anstey) contended that so far did the public right of fishery extend; and further, that no right could be acquired by private individuals, except by Act of Parliament, or by prescriptive right dated as far back as Henry II.; and therefore the Government, as the trustees for the public, were bound to watch over and preserve this valuable public right. He believed there was not a case in which the law was otherwise; certainly not in the river Shannon, where the corporation of Limerick had lately let some fisheries on lease, to their own advantage he supposed, as well as of those who had taken them, but to the great detriment and prejudice of the public interest. Still it was not his intention, if the Committee were granted, to attempt to destroy the *quasi* rights of those particular claimants. He merely wished to make out a case which should entitle him to obtain the Committee, by means of which he hoped to simplify the law, and provide equitably for every interest. The monopolists of those obstructions had proceeded further and further in their usurpations of rights which should belong to the poor, until, in a country watered by rivers of the largest amount, both in number and extent, filled with the finest fish, in quantities sufficient not merely for home supply but for the markets of Great Britain, not a single fish was taken in many rivers, and not one would in a few years be taken in any river above the weirs themselves, except by the permission and connivance of those who claimed the special rights. And those obstructions were specially noticeable in those districts in Ireland where famine was most rife and rampant. He should trouble the House with a few details in illustration of his assertion. He had culled them from various papers upon the subject, which had from time to time been printed by order of the House. Beginning with the county of Meath, and proceeding to Louth—in which the fishery of the river Boyne was monopolised under a local patent granted to the corporation of Drogheda, but really monopolised by two or three private individuals, all the rivers were usurped. In Antrim nearly all the rivers and the coast were claimed under patent. Lough Beg and Neagh, the river Ban, from Coleraine to Lough Neagh, and the entire coast, from Innishowen Head to the Giants' Causeway, were similarly monopolised. In the county Donegal, several rivers and the coast were likewise claimed. The same was the case with the river Erne, from Lough Erne to the sea, and with the Glendore and seven other rivers. And here he should beg to observe, that all the patents under which these claims were made were no older than the date of Elizabeth. In Leitrim, Mayo, and Galway, in Clare and Limerick, nearly every river was monopolised. The Shannon was obstructed by a weir at a place where the river was three quarters of a mile wide, and the gap left for the salmon to ascend was only twenty-one feet broad, or one fifty-eighth part of the whole width. Yet, whether the commissioners of the Shannon navigation had exercised their powers, or rather fulfilled the duties imposed upon them by statute in every other instance, they had not attempted to touch that weir. In the county Kerry, all the rivers were monopolised. In Cork, only the Bandon and the Lee were claimed under patent; the remainder were monopolised without any such right being shown. In Waterford, the Blackwater, the Barrow, the Suir, and the Nore, were held without patent. In Wicklow, the Bray river and all the others were held under patent; and in Dublin the Liffey was held under a patent, which, however, related only to a portion of its course. By the direct operation of these obstructions the people of Ireland were defrauded of 600,000*l.* annually, the value of the fish; and to that mischief should be added another, and a consequential injury, arising from the damaged one through the want of police to guard the upper portions of the rivers. None of the gentlemen whose properties lay along the upper portions of rivers could possibly think it worth their while to prevent poaching, when the entire advantage of that interference and care would fall to the river owners in the lower parts. And the result was, that poaching was universal. In the river Blackwater alone it was computed that 1,000 female fish annually were destroyed when coming up to spawn, each of which fish was estimated to produce 15,000 ova, of which 800 would have come to maturity. So that the destruction thus effected (taking the low average of eight pounds weight for every one of those 800 fish, and the low price of sixpence a pound) was equal to a loss of three tons of fish and 160*l.* annually for every spawning salmon destroyed in that one river, or 160,000*l.* in all. Such was the case he had to present to the House, as his ground for asking for the Committee. If it were granted to him, and he had reason to believe the Government would not refuse, he would suggest his remedies. He was content to take the law as it stood. He would even clothe with the sanction of the law those encroachments which had equity in their favour, and were not of modern origin. But the law, as it at present stood, was altogether ineffective. The gentlemen of Cork, Clare, and other counties, who had requested him to take the matter in hand, had not done so until they had proved the utter inefficiency of the present law. Whenever they had attacked the monopolists, some man of straw had been put forward to bear the brunt of the proceedings, and the judge before whom the case was tried had generally inflicted the minimum fine; and in every case, he believed, the judge directed the sheriffs of the counties to see that the obnoxious weir was removed, and if it were taken away, the fine was not to be estreated into Her Majesty's Exchequer. As to the courts of quarter-session and petty session, there was no such thing as satisfaction to be had from them. The majority of the magistrates on the bench were generally weir-owners themselves, and they refused to convict. The mode of provision by the Legislature, which he (Mr. C. Anstey) would propose, would be, that immediately upon a conviction being obtained before any existing tribunal, or before any tribunal which might be hereafter established, the duty of prostration of the weir should become a matter of police. The weir should be thrown down by the police, and if another were erected, it should be also thrown down at once, without any further prosecution. And although that would be by no means sufficient to satisfy all the requirements of the case, it yet would go a great way. If the Committee were granted him, it was not his intention, in the present state of the public finances to ask for power to send for witnesses. If witnesses should volunteer, he would ask the Committee to examine them. But there was abundance of evidence already before the House. There were reports of evidence of witnesses taken before the Board of Works. Most of these had been examined by Mr. Mulvany, who was rather obnoxious to the very gentlemen on whose behalf he (Mr. Anstey) was then speaking; and yet with those reports and with that evidence he would be satisfied. The Minutes were admitted not to have been taken verbatim, but only by way of extracts from the evidence. Nevertheless, he would assume them to be true and correct, so far as they went, and he would be satisfied with them. He should also ask for the correspondence which had been carried on last year between Her Majesty's Government and those persons who were interested in the fisheries, which correspondence showed the great difficulty of obtaining convictions under the law as it stood. This would be quite sufficient for all the purposes of justice. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving for the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the present state of the inland fisheries and navigation of Ireland, &c.

Sir H. W. BARRON seconded the Motion, and suggested the propriety of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Anstey) adding to his Motion words which would include the deep-sea fisheries of Ireland. The deep-sea fisheries formed a question of the utmost importance, and it was one which Parliament had neglected to a most culpable extent. It presented an inexhaustible fund of wealth and employment, and yet it had been impossible to induce Parliament to look to it. The Scotch fishermen had been carefully instructed in the best methods of catching and curing fish, under the auspices of a board that was established in Edinburgh in the year 1800. That board had done incalculable good in improving the Scotch fisheries. Since its appointment by the Government the Scotch fisheries had extended beyond any example ever known before. The Government had fostered and improved the Scotch fisheries; and it was a melancholy fact, that Scotch fishermen sent into the Irish markets annually 15,000*l.* worth of fish caught actually upon the Irish coast. That matter had been pressed upon the Government and upon Parliament year after year by the Irish Members; but it had, up to the present moment, been as constantly neglected. He (Sir H. W. Barron) had himself brought it forward in 1835, again in 1839, and again in 1847. Upon each occasion there had been fair promises given that something should be done; but these promises proved to be *vox et preterea nihil.* All sides of the House agreed as to the beneficial results that might be expected from encouraging and fostering the deep-sea fisheries of Ireland. Promises were given in plenty; but, up to the present hour, not one had been performed; and the poor Irish fishermen were still suffering and starving upon their coasts, with abundance of fish in sight of them, but without the requisite machinery for their take. No practical help had been given to these poor men to enable them to work that mine of wealth. It was not fair, nor true, nor just, to charge the Irish Members with having neglected so important a subject. They had long been vainly endeavouring to force it upon the attention of Parliament. He (Sir H. W. Barron) trusted it was not yet too late. The welfare of 350,000 or 400,000 individuals was dependent upon the fisheries; and had they been attended to in time, the poor people of Connemara, of Mayo, and of Galway, would not now be starving. Had they been fostered and attended to forty years ago, as the Scotch had been, the Government would not have now to come down and ask a grant from Parliament to keep the poor Irish fishermen from dying of starvation. He, therefore, implored of the House, as a matter of economy, if not of humanity and common sense, to place the Irish fisheries upon the same footing as the Scotch. He (Sir H. W. Barron) could bring before the Committee five or six witnesses to show the necessity of inquiry touching those fisheries, and the necessity of teaching the poor fishermen the art of taking and curing their fish. But, as a preliminary measure, there was nothing wanted so much as a superintending board, such as there was in Scotland.

The O'GORMAN MAHON said, he had intended to have seconded the Motion of his hon. Friend (Mr. Anstey), and he rejoiced that he had been anticipated in that intention by the hon. Baronet the Member for Waterford (Sir H. W. Barron). He begged to confirm all that had been said by his hon. Friends. In the parts with which he was connected, he could assure the House there were thousands of men in a state of destitution in consequence of the total absence of the means of obtaining subsistence for themselves and others. Had the Irish deep-sea fishery been attended to and encouraged, the Irish people would have been in comparative ease, because the fishery would have given employment to the men on the coast. He believed, however, it would be better for his hon. Friend (Sir W. Barron) to allow the Committee to be named, and then the hon. Baronet might move an instruction to the Committee to include this branch of the question.

SIR W. SOMERVILLE said, it was not his intention to object to the appointment of the Committee asked for by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Anstey). But as to the suggestion of his hon. Friend behind him (Sir H. W. Barron), it referred to a totally and entirely different subject. Indeed he (Sir W. Somerville) did not see how anything in the Motion of the hon. Member for Youghal (Mr. Anstey) could be made to apply to the subject of the deep-sea fisheries. The hon. Member for Youghal had correctly stated the present condition of the law. He believed the hon. Gentleman had directed his attention very carefully to the state of the law upon the subject in Ireland, and he had correctly stated both its condition and the objects which he (Sir W. Somerville) had in view in proposing the measure of last year. Several Acts of Parliament had been passed for the purpose of regulating the fisheries in Ireland. There were general complaints from all parts of the country as to the condition of those laws, and allegations that they were inoperative, because there was no police to carry them out. The Bill of last Session was therefore enacted, to give power to the parties interested to meet together and arrange methods by which they could be their own conservators, and to increase the anxiety of gentlemen whose properties lay up the rivers to protect the spawning fish. He (Sir W. Somerville) admitted it was an experiment which had not as yet been fairly tried; but the Bill placed in the hands of the parties interested the power of protecting their own rights. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Anstey) was also quite right in stating that the law was defective. He (Sir W. Somerville) recollected that in the course of the discussion last Session the hon. Gentleman had said that it would not do that for which it was intended—that it would not give power to remove illegal obstructions. He quite agreed with the hon. Gentleman that the salmon fisheries of Ireland had been greatly neglected, and that there was in them a mine of wealth which had not been as yet sufficiently explored. But he did not see what good the Committee upon such a subject could effect in the case of the deep-sea fisheries, as suggested by the hon. Baronet the Member for Waterford (Sir H. W. Barron). In the course of last year a good deal had been done under the superintendence of the Government Board of Works, by the establishing of fishing stations in some localities. Some of them had worked extremely well, whilst others had not turned out so well; but he hoped that a great deal had been done, and that some information had been imparted to the poor fishermen. The Government would, he thought, leave these matters, as respected the fishing stations, in future to private enterprise. He perfectly understood what was the object of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Anstey), and he hoped the result of these inquiries would be to improve the stock of the fisheries.

Mr. H. HERBERT said, that the Bill of last year had been rendered inoperative from the size of the districts into which the country was divided. They were so large as to render anything like co-operation impossible.

Mr. W. FAGAN supported the Motion. He said that instead of 15,000*l.*, 60,000*l.* was paid annually by Ireland for foreign fish. He was present during the discussion of last year, and was willing to take his share of the responsibility of the Act passed upon that occasion; but it was due to himself to state that he then concurred in the propriety of passing that Act, for the reason assigned by those interested in the fisheries of Ireland, namely, that the system of poaching was carried on to such an extent that if the Bill were not carried, all the fish would be destroyed. It was then stated that the fish destroyed in the Blackwater river alone in one year amounted to 160,000*l.*, that the police would be a sufficient protection to the fisheries, and that the only mode by which the police guarding the fisheries could be remunerated was by means of an assessment. Now, Lord Stuart De Decies had stated at Waterford that it was impossible to obtain a sufficiency of police for the purpose; but it certainly was to obtain such a force of constabulary as would protect the fisheries efficiently, that the Bill of last year had been obtained by the Government. One of the chief objections to that Bill, was the imposition on the poor fishermen of a tax which they were unable to pay. It appeared that from Cappoquin to Youghal, there were 200 fishermen who subsisted on the earnings they realised by the fish they caught; and so wretched were these men at present, that they could neither pay the 20*s.* tax, nor give their families a meal a day. In the Cork river the poor fishermen who supported themselves at one time by catching salmon, were now cut off from that means of support; and therefore, if there were no other inducements than these for supporting the Motion before the House, he would be glad to give it his cordial vote.

Sir J. YOUNG said, that he had no objection to the Motion, but he feared that the appointment of the Committee would only lead to the usual result—namely, that no legislative enactment could supply that defect in the Irish fisheries which could alone be adequately met by well-directed private enterprise. He believed that had capital and industry been applied by Irishmen to those fisheries in past times, they would be now in a most flourishing condition. He believed also that it had been already clearly proved that rights to several of the fisheries existed in Ireland to a much greater extent than many supposed, and that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Anstey) who made the present Motion would find himself mistaken if he fancied that by the appointment of this Committee he could set those rights aside. He was aware that the owners had, in several instances, surrendered rights which they had claimed for half a century, and accepted a compromise; but still costly litigation would be produced, if there was any general interference attempted with private rights, many of which were supported by legal opinions of the highest eminence.

Motion agreed to.

TRANSFER OF REAL PROPERTY.

MR. H. DRUMMOND said, when he asked for leave to introduce a Bill for diminishing the labour and expense attendant upon the sale and transfer of real property, he thought he had stated sufficient to ensure the favourable reception of the measure by the House. There was no more reason why land should not be as perfectly free in the market as any other commodity. The hon. Gentleman, alluding to the then state of the House, observed that the subject did not seem to excite much interest, seeing that so great a proportion of the hon. Members had gone home to dinner. He might quote many authorities who had advocated this sentiment in times past; but it would be a work of supererogation. Were it not for the feudal tenures which were still preserved, the disposal of land would be quite unshackled. He would not now enter into the nature of these tenures, or show how all their general evil had been maintained, although the burdens upon owners of land had been long since remitted; and as he did not intend to dilate upon these subjects, he felt himself in this difficulty, with respect to recommending his measure—that he did not know upon what grounds the opposition to it could go, and therefore he did not know what objection to answer. He could only reply at hazard to a few difficulties which he had heard started out of doors. First, he had been told that it was presumptuous in a person not called to the bar to introduce a Bill upon a subject of this kind. Now, being called to the bar, meant taking a certain number of dinners, and paying a certain amount of fees. And he had certainly not been able to discover any necessary connexion between these operations and the capability of drawing a Bill. The question was not one in which a lawyer need bestir himself. Sidney Smith said long ago that the Court of Chancery was like a boa constrictor, which swallowed the estate of an English gentleman whole, and digested it at its leisure. Then why should lawyers bestir themselves in law reform? They performed the office of masticators and digesters, and that was probably enough for them. No. This was a question in which the owners of land, and those who might become the owners of land, were the parties really interested. But then, it was said, that nobody but a lawyer could draw up a Bill. That remained to be proved. A great many Bills had been drawn up by many very eminent lawyers, which were found to be of very little use. Nay, no later than last Session, a Bill for facilitating the sale of land in Ireland had been most carefully prepared by the highest legal functionaries of the Government; and that Bill, he was informed by many Irish Members, was little better than a *caput mortuum.* In fact, it frequently proved that Bills which one set of lawyers drew up, puzzled another set of lawyers to interpret. Here, however, he would be perhaps told that there was a Crown Commission sitting on the subject; and he would be asked whether he would not wait to see what that Commission would do. *Rusticus expectat*—and he would be a very simple rustic indeed, were he to expect any practically advantageous results from a Crown Commission. Again, he was told that he would be opposed by the lawyers, because his Bill would interfere with their interests. He repudiated such an idea. The study of the law was the study of a liberal profession, elevating men above sordid and interested motives; and he would as soon believe that medical men would object to the reception of a remedy for malignant disease—or that military men would decry a general peace—as that lawyers would object to such a measure as he had to propose. He had once indeed heard of the members of a medical college congratulating themselves on an unsatisfactory state of the public health, and drinking to the progress of slow fever with three times three. But he rejected such scandals, and he could assure the House that all the lawyers whom he had spoken to were favourable to his measure, and that he counted upon their kindness to supply his legal deficiencies. After the fullest examination which he had been able to give to the subject, and with the fullest information which he had been able to collect, he had arrived at the firmest conviction that it was impossible to effect the object which he had in view in any other way than by the provisions of such a measure as he held in his hand. He proposed to establish a registry of deeds and lands, and he proposed that entries should be accompanied by full and ample maps of the estates referred to. In former times this was accompanied with some difficulty; but now that there existed a map of every parish in the kingdom, under the Tithe Commission, nothing more would be required than to copy out the necessary portions of that map. He also proposed that there should be a public registration of all incumbrances, of any species, upon land; but he did not propose that this should be compulsory. He left it to the discretion of individuals. Such were the main provisions of his Bill. He thought that the only objection which would be made to it was, that it did not go far enough; but in matters of this kind he preferred a measure which went the least possible distance. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving for leave to introduce the Bill.

Mr. P. WOOD seconded the Motion.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL said, he would offer no objection to the introduction of the Bill. The hon. Member (Mr. H. Drummond) had clearly informed the House of the object of the measure, and of the mode by which it was proposed to be carried into effect; but it was impossible to express any very decided opinion upon the subject until the Bill was printed and in the hands of the Members. Nobody could deny the desirability of the object the hon. Member sought to obtain; and he (the Solicitor General) thought that the hon. Member was in the right direction as to the mode of carrying that object into effect. He had no doubt that registration was the most efficacious mode of effecting it, and that no registration could be complete and effectual without a very perfect system of maps. But the subject was involved in very great difficulties—difficulties so great that he had paid great attention to see how they could be obviated; but there was no objection to allow the Motion to pass, and he would give the hon. Member every assistance in carrying his very laudable object into effect.

Leave given to bring in the Bill.

BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION AT ELECTIONS.

Sir J. PAKINGTON moved for leave to bring in a Bill for the better prevention of bribery and corruption at elections of Members to serve in Parliament. He said the importance of this Bill, which he had prepared with some degree of care, would be generally admitted. He had learned since he entered the House that the gross and notorious extent of bribery and corruption at the last two general elections was so generally acknowledged, that there was not likely to be any opposition to his Motion to bring in the Bill. He proposed, therefore, to reserve what he had to state for the second reading; and under the idea that he would best consult the convenience of the House by the adoption of this course, he would now postpone the arguments which he intended at this stage to bring forward in favour of the new principle he proposed to adopt. He moved formally for leave to bring in the Bill, and said that on the second reading he would state his remedy for the evils so generally acknowledged, and explain the deficiency of the existing law.

Mr. BROTHERTON seconded the Motion.

Lord J. RUSSELL said, he was glad the hon. Member (Sir J. Pakington) had introduced a measure having so desirable an object in view, and that when he saw a copy of the Bill, he would pay the utmost attention to its provisions.

Colonel SIBTHORP said, that until he saw a copy of the Bill, he could not promise it his support; but that he was decidedly opposed to every species of bribery and corruption at elections. He believed that until the giving of wages and places to those who supported certain candidates was done away with, there could be no end to bribery and corruption; and that the greatest corruption was practised by those hon. Members on the other side of the House who would saddle it, if they could, upon their political opponents.

Leave given to bring in the Bill.

PUBLIC ROADS AND TURNPIKES.

Mr. C. LEWIS moved for leave to bring in a Bill to consolidate and amend the laws relating to public roads in England and North Wales. He said he would, as far as he was able, follow the example of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. H. Drummond) by making a short speech; but as the subject was one of great magnitude, he must be permitted to state the contents of the Bill which he begged to be allowed to introduce. It was, perhaps, scarcely necessary for him to speak of the present law with regard to public roads and highways. The old law of England relative to highways imposed the liability of repair exclusively on the parish. During the last century, and the early part of the present century, a number of Acts were passed by which the main roads of the country were taken from the parish, and placed under the control of trustees, who were enabled to levy tolls for the repair of the roads, and the payment of the principal and interest of the debt incurred. The principal roads of the country were selected according to the state of the traffic. Many changes had, however, taken place in the traffic, and of late years a great revolution had been created by the introduction of railways. In consequence of that general introduction of railways, many of the main trunks of communication had lost their importance; they had become secondary; and branch lines not included in the Turnpike Acts had become the principal lines of communication. The consequence was, that the introduction of railways had entirely subverted the only existing system of maintaining the roads; and now it became incumbent on the House to deal in some practical manner with the subject. One of the consequences of the change was, that many trustees had become insolvent; that they were unable to discharge the debt they had contracted; that, in some instances, the mortgagees and bondholders now collected the tolls on their own account; that litigation had been produced; and that the necessity had arisen of coming on the parish for a highway rate in aid in order to maintain the roads. A temporary Act was passed in the year 1841, which had been continued by annual renewal since. The system also of the renewing of Turnpike Acts was not satisfactory; and it had been thought advisable not to confine the measure to highways, but to include in it also the turnpike roads for England and Scotland by a single Act of the Government, thus making it necessary for the Government to express an opinion upon the subject; and therefore the whole system of Turnpike Acts was at present in a very unsatisfactory state. Under these circumstances, it had been thought advisable to attempt to deal with the entire subject of roads, not confining the measure to highways, as was done by the measure of last year, but including both turnpike roads and highways properly so called. A measure had been introduced by the Government last Session, by which it was proposed to deal with highways, excluding turnpike roads. It was referred to a Committee, but it was not proceeded with; and one objection to it was, that it created an expensive machinery for the maintenance of highways, and that it took no notice of that part of the question which was of the greatest difficulty, namely, the turnpike roads. It was therefore advisable now to introduce a measure that would include both highways and turnpike roads. The number of places repairing their own highways was at present 18,000. The number of miles was 100,000. The annual expense of highways, exclusive of turnpike roads, was 1,400,000*l.* The number of turnpike trusts was 1,150. The annual expense of turnpikes in England and Wales in 1846 was 1,378,000*l.* Therefore, taking both together, the highways and turnpike roads, the expense annually was 2,778,000*l.* But, unfortunately, the financial part of the question was not confined to this; for a very large debt was created under the Turnpike Acts. The bond debt was 6,826,000*l.*, and the interest was 1,441,000*l.*; so that the debt of the turnpike trusts in all was about 8,267,000*l.* That was the state of things with which the House had now to deal; and those acquainted with the two classes of roads must admit, that there was nothing less satisfactory or creditable to Parliament than leaving the subject any longer unattended to. It called for a remedy; and the only question was, whether the measure he proposed was the one to meet the difficulty. At present there were two "units" of taxation—in the first place, the parish, and in the next, the turnpike trust, which maintained its turnpike roads by means of tolls. He proposed by the present measure to abolish both these "units" of taxation, to abolish all parochial liability for the maintenance of roads, to abolish those very arbitrary concerns the turnpike trusts, and to take, as the area of taxation and management, the county. There were many reasons why the county should be taken instead of the parish. He proposed to place the local control of the roads in a committee of the quarter-sessions, to be elected by the magistrates, and to be called "the county road board." This body would have a general control, and the power of electing a surveyor, to be paid out of the county rate. With regard to the local management, he proposed that the districts should be the poor-law unions, and that the county board should have the power of dividing all the roads in the county into two classes—one, the main roads; and the other, the branch roads. On the main roads they would be empowered, subject to the general regulations of the Bill, to collect tolls; and the other class of roads would be maintained in the manner he would afterwards state. He proposed that on the 25th of March, 1850, all turnpike and highway jurisdiction should cease, and a new machinery be put in force from that day. But there was another point. The debt owing by the turnpike trusts amounted to a sum exceeding 8,000,000*l.* The main difficulty centred in that debt; and in order to defray it, he proposed that the county roads board should take measures to form a county road fund, which should be derived, first, from tolls levied on the main roads; and, secondly, from a county rate—a county rate being substituted for highway rate. Arbitrators would be appointed to estimate the existing market value of all securities, and the county board should issue debentures for the amount charged and secured on the county roads fund. The only question would be as to inequalities which might arise from the charge being made coincident with the entire county, though some of the turnpike trusts might be connected with adjoining counties. But unless some arrangement of the kind proposed were adopted, it would be impossible to devise a general plan by which the debt would be secured, and full security given to the bondholders. It was proposed that the debt should be paid off in a period of not less than seven, or more than twenty-one, years. By the present Acts, no provision was made for the ultimate extinction of the debts. To pay 100*l.* in twenty-one years, allowing 4 per cent interest, required an annual payment of 7*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* To pay 100*l.* in seven years, allowing 4 per cent interest, required an annual payment of 16*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* The difference between extinction in seven and in twenty-one years was, therefore, very considerable. He (Mr. Lewis) had now stated the outline of the Bill; but before he concluded, he must be allowed to say, that having given his best consideration to the subject, he had arrived at the conviction that some measure founded upon the principles he had put forward as the foundation of the present Bill, must be adopted as the basis of legislation on the subject. If that were not considered by the House as a safe basis on which to legislate, the only alternative was to resort to local legislation, and to continue a system fraught with many inconveniences ; but the inconvenience attending local boards was, that Parliament could exercise over them but very imperfect control, and that affairs would have to be settled by Committees upstairs in connexion with local interests, to the detriment of great and important interests in the country. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving for leave to introduce the Bill.

Mr. HENLEY thanked the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Lewis) for the lucid statement he had made. With reference to the debt, he begged to remind the House that it had been incurred in order to facilitate the traffic of the country. The subject was one of great difficulty, and no one could say that the scheme proposed by the hon. Gentleman was not comprehensive. The hon. Gentleman had told them, that in this country there were some 100,000 miles of highways, and about 2,000 turnpike trusts. The hon. Gentleman proposed to throw all these into the management of the 700 poor-law unions throughout the country. Whether the guardians could manage such an amount of additional business, was a point which ought to be considered. The great difficulty, however, in the plan proposed, was the debt. It was proposed by the hon. Gentleman to mortgage the county rates of England to the extent of 8,000,000*l.* According to the plan of the hon. Gentleman, the county board was to establish a sinking fund, to pay off the debt in twenty-one years. To do so, an annual sum of 400,000*l.* would be required, or in other words, half the amount of the county rate at present expended in the maintenance of the public roads, without including interest. That was a very heavy tax to lay on counties at a time when they were beginning to taste the pleasure of wheat at 5*s.* a bushel; and after they had cut down hills, and overcome engineering difficulties at a great expense, not for their own benefit, but for the benefit of those who wanted to travel at ten miles an hour. A few years ago a measure, cognate with this, was introduced into Parliament. The hon. Gentleman ought also to recollect that the debt had been incurred for commercial purposes and to facilitate traffic between different parts of the country. He lived in a county in which a great number of roads existed, which were a heavy taxation upon the ratepayers in the county, which he did not think was fair. There was always a great objection to dealing with bonded debts in Parliament. One thing had not been stated in the explanation of the hon. Gentleman, and that was, the present improved and improving condition of the turnpike roads, a condition which, for the last three or four years, had been much better than previously. Another matter connected with the subject was worthy of consideration; and that was, that for the same period there had been a small but progressive decrease in the aggregate debt of the turnpike roads. He believed, also, that the expenditure upon them had been lessened since the diminution of that great traffic which, in contradistinction from the mere local, was called the "through" traffic. He had no intention, however, of throwing any impediment in the way of the present measure, or of its full and fair discussion; for it was a great and comprehensive one, and likely to be productive of much general benefit.

Sir J. PAKINGTON had gathered from the clear statement of the hon. Member (Mr. Lewis), that the principle of his measure was to be the consolidation of turnpike trusts, and the payment of their debts by means of a sinking fund. That entirely met his idea as to the manner in which the difficulties connected with the question of turnpike trusts might be removed. In 1843, when Sir James Graham was Secretary for the Home Department, a Bill was introduced relative to turnpike trusts, and was referred to a Committee, of which he (Sir J. Pakington) was chairman. That Committee concurred with him in strongly recommending the adoption of the principle now proposed by the hon. Under Secretary for the Home Department. The hon. Member for Oxford (Mr. Henley) had omitted to take into consideration that the tolls derived from the turnpike roads would go in aid of the sinking fund to pay off the debt; but, at the same time, it could not be denied that the adoption of the measure would impose a great charge on the county rates; and, on that account, it could not fail to be viewed with jealousy.

Mr. BROTHERTON approved of the measure suggested, and, believing it would be productive of general benefit, expressed a hope that it might eventually be adopted.

Mr. SLANEY observed, that no doubt there were considerable difficulties in the way of settling the present question; but he believed the clear statement which had been made that night, would be met with approbation throughout the country, and it showed, at least, that the greatest possible attention had been paid to the subject. Instead of the carrying out of the proposition being an expensive improvement, he was of opinion that it would eventually be found the most economical arrangement for the landed interest that had ever been made in this country. Every one knew how much good means of communication throughout a district enhanced the value of land. He concluded by expressing his hope that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Lewis) who made the proposition would receive all the fair and honourable assistance which they could give him in its progress through the House.

Mr. SPOONER thought there was a good deal of justice in what had fallen from his hon. Friend the Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Henley). He did not think the tolls could come in aid of the sinking fund, as was contemplated, because they were at present inadequate to meet the charges on them; and, besides, he considered that it would not be fair to have well-managed trusts brought in to bear the burden of ill-managed ones. He was content, however, to give the measure every fair consideration. It was a matter of great importance also for them to consider, how they would bring upon the county rates the sum of 8,000,000*l*., which was now funded on the security of turnpike roads.

Captain PECHELL confessed he looked with some suspicion upon a proposition which would tend to put the roads of the country under a centralisation system instead of a local control—a system to which he was always opposed; and although he was not disposed to oppose the measure from what they had then heard of it, he would caution the hon. Member who introduced it against being too sanguine about its ultimate success.

Sir G. STRICKLAND said, one of the great difficulties with which they would have to contend, was the immense debt which now impended over the turnpike trusts. Those which were well managed, he agreed with the hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. Spooner), ought not to be saddled with the debts of others' mismanagement. There was another part of the subject upon which he felt some mistrust. For centuries there had been a certain mode adopted in this country for the management of highways with branches, which it might not be advisable to change. He thought the country roads at the present moment much better than they had been at former periods; and he would ask, why was it that these roads were now to be placed under this new management? He had a mistrust, he confessed, about leaving the highways in the hands of boards of guardians. He believed that they had enough to do at present, and more than they could do well, without imposing any such additional work as this upon them. He gave the hon. Member (Mr. Lewis) who brought forward the measure every credit for the best intentions, and he hoped all parties would concur in helping him to bring his labours to a useful result.

Leave given to bring in the Bill.

WOODS, FORESTS, AND LAND REVENUES COMMITTEE.

MR. TRELAWNY rose to move—

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee to extend their inquiry to the Duchies of Cornwall and Lancaster."

He (Mr. Trelawny) knew that he should be met with the objection that the duchy of Cornwall was not Crown property, and that it was originally given to the eldest son of the Monarch. But to this he answered, that in case of the death of the Prince of Wales the property reverted to the Crown; and that during the whole period of 500 years, for which the duchy of Cornwall had been held, it had been longer in the possession of the Crown than of any Duke of Cornwall. Considering that Parliament would soon have to determine upon a provision for the Prince of Wales, it was of importance that an inquiry should be made into the present management of this property; and as the Committee of Woods and Forests were now sitting, he could not see what objection could be urged to the matter being referred to them. Perhaps he would be told that these revenues were private property. If they were so, then why were the accounts annually published, and submitted to the House? In 1846 the gross income of the duchy of Cornwall amounted to 50,395*l.*, and the amount paid to the Crown and the trustees of the Crown was only 12,032*l.*, so that the cost of collecting was 38,363*l.* He therefore thought this subject highly demanding investigation, for no private estate would be allowed to remain in such a mismanaged condition; and for these reasons he had brought forward this Motion. He might be told that the management was recently much improved; but that did not argue that still greater improvements might not be effected.

LORD J. RUSSELL said, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Trelawny) who made this Motion, had shown in his speech that he brought it forward with the view of applying the revenues of these two duchies to the exigencies of the public service as part of the supplies. It was on this ground that he (Lord J. Russell) must oppose this Motion. This House, before which the whole question of the revenues of the Crown came, had declared that the Crown might receive the revenues of these duchies. The Parliament could, of course, if they thought fit, make a new settlement on the Crown; and it was, of course, perfectly competent—though he would not say it would be just or expedient to make such an arrangement—for them to make that new settlement contingent upon the surrender of these particular revenues. But, having made an arrangement with the Crown, and provided, by Act of Parliament, that the Crown should keep those revenues, he maintained that it would be totally unjust and unfair to seek now to depart from that contract, merely because of some wish for economy in the public service. Every one knew there were sources of revenue that belonged to former sovereigns that no longer belonged to Her present Majesty. There were, for instance, revenues of the King of Hanover that belonged to William IV., but which did not now belong to Her Majesty. But, as the hon. Gentleman stated, there had been mismanagement of the duchies of Lancaster and Cornwall; and with a view of putting some check upon this mismanagement, it was enacted that accounts should be periodically presented to Parliament of the general receipts and expenditure. The hon. Gentleman had alluded to the great proportion of the expenditure as compared with the receipts, and had said, very truly, that great improvement had been made in the management of these revenues. This was certainly the case; and he (Lord J. Russell) believed that at present persons were employed, with respect to both of these duchies, in carrying out such improvements as a private proprietor would introduce in managing his own estate; and the income, as compared with the expenditure, was in the way of becoming in a much more improved condition. On these grounds, then, and considering that the matter had been already settled, and that the credit of Parliament would be seriously impaired by a reference of these accounts to the Committee, and considering likewise that no further benefit could accrue from such a step than was already in the course of being secured, he must oppose this Motion.

MR. M. GIBSON said, he did not understand the hon. Mover (Mr. Trelawny) to propose that these lands should be sold and applied in aid of the public burdens; but merely to state that a great constitutional authority had advocated an inquiry into these revenues, which presented so strong a case of mismanagement. Without going into the pecuniary question, he would observe that there was something like public inconvenience in having these independent jurisdictions and principalities within the country, which created litigation and vexatious proceedings of various kinds. He doubted whether they were of advantage to the Crown, or any person employed under it, or to any class of Her Majesty's subjects. If anything could be done to obviate this, it would be a great public advantage. Burke had observed—

> "Every one of these principalities has the apparatus of a kingdom for the jurisdiction over a few private estates, and the formality and charge of the Exchequer of Great Britain for collecting the rents of a country squire."

It was certain that a very much larger revenue would accrue to the Crown if this system of management was altered.

Mr. TRELAWNY said, in the present state of the House, he should not press his Motion to a division.

Motion negatived.

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE (IRELAND).

Sir W. SOMERVILLE moved for leave to bring a Bill to amend the Laws which regulate the Qualification and Registration of Parliamentary Voters in Ireland. He said it would be in the recollection of the House, that in the course of last Session he obtained permission to lay upon the table a Bill to amend the laws regulating the qualification and registration of Parliamentary voters in Ireland. He then took the opportunity of stating to the House the principle of the measure which he introduced on that occasion; and as the Bill which he would now, with the permission of the House, place upon the table, differed in no very material degree in the nature of its provisions from those of the measure he had previously introduced, it would be unnecessary for him to occupy the time of the House by any lengthened statement on the subject. It was not necessary for him to dwell upon the great importance of the question, or upon the unsatisfactory nature of the present franchise, and present mode of registering Parliamentary electors; nor was it needful for him now to comment upon the great desirableness of a change in both of these respects. The principle of the present measure was simply this—the doing away with all qualification requiring occupation, and the substitution of a simple rating to the poor-law instead. He proposed to fix the amount of the rating the same as he did last year, namely, at a net annual value of 8*l*. and upward. That would be coupled with a condition of having paid the poor-rates due within six months, not of the time of voting, as in the former Bill, but of the time of registration. He had intended last year to leave the borough franchise as it is now, with this exception, that he did away with the payment of all rates excepting poor-rates, which were, as in the case of the county franchise, to be paid previously to voting. He proposed, in this Bill, to adopt the same principle with regard to the borough franchise, as he proposed with regard to the county, namely, to do away with every other species of franchise requiring occupation, and adopt the 8*l*. rating in town and county to the poor-rates. Having gone fully into the subject last year, he would now merely lay the Bill, with the House's permission, upon the table, requesting a full, fair, and candid consideration of its details. With reference to the registration, he proposed the adoption of an annual system of revision, and an annual system of registration. He believed this measure would not have the effect of giving an undue number of voters in Ireland, as compared with England or Scotland. The right hon. Baronet concluded by moving for leave to introduce the Bill.

Mr. STAFFORD said, he could not help remarking the strange coincidence of the same Government, which had only a few nights ago come down to the House with a Bill for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland, now coming forward to propound a scale of political franchise for the same people lower than that enjoyed by the people of England. Let not the right hon. Baronet (Sir W. Somerville) flatter himself that because, with the thin attendance of Members now in the House, and the seeming acquiescence in his present Motion, that his (Mr. Stafford's) side of the House, in the least degree, pledged its assent to any one of the details of this Bill, or that it was in any way hindered from resorting to every legitimate means for opposing its final passing. With regard to the amount of the franchise, and with regard to the same qualification being adopted for both town and county districts, he (Mr. Stafford) would reserve to himself the most free and entire right of fully discussing and criticising each of these points. He also attached great importance to the question as to who should have to bear the expense of all this registration; and why the necessity of being registered, whether he would or not, should be forced upon the tenant in Ireland, as appeared to be contemplated by this measure, he would not now stop to inquire.

MR. E. B. ROCHE thought the remark of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stafford) who had just spoken, as to the inopportuneness of the present measure, seeing it was only the other night they had been called upon to suspend the constitution in Ireland, was something very like mere child's play. For his part, he (Mr. Roche) did not think the measure was sufficiently extensive ; instead of desiring to pare it down, he considered it did not go far enough. He had hoped, after the great examples given of late throughout Europe, of the extension of the rights of popular representation, that the Government of Great Britain and Ireland would not have lagged behind other nations, which formerly it was her glory and boast to excel, in the liberties and freedom enjoyed by her people—in the amount of concessions it would yield to the masses in this age of advancement and popular enlightenment. With regard to the system of registration proposed, he hoped it would be at least the means of putting an end to the disgusting scenes that now occurred from time to time in the registration courts.

VISCOUNT BERNARD considered, in the present prostrate condition of Ireland, when they were called upon to make grants from the national treasury as subsidies to unions in Ireland overwhelmed with a rapidly increasing pauper population, that measures of a very different character from the present—which he could not but characterise as a party measure, intended by the Government as a bait to catch support from hon. Members in that House, and which could confer no conceivable practical good on the starving people or the desolate estates of Ireland—were imperiously called for, and demanded precedence from Her Majesty's Ministers. There were the medical charities of Ireland, affecting the interests of the poor, and also entailing heavy expense upon the most distressed districts; then there was a sanitary measure for the towns and cities of Ireland (the measure of last year having proved a complete failure); then there was the extension of railways in that country; next its fisheries, and a variety of other plans for developing the national resources of Ireland, which had all a prior claim upon the Government's attention. He strongly objected to the entire Irish policy of the present Administration, and considered it their duty, when they appointed the Committee on the Poor Laws, to have given the Committee some clue and guiding principles regarding the nature of the amendments required to be effected. With regard to the present measure, he must strenuously oppose it. He saw no ground whatever why the borough franchise should be interfered with.

MR. GROGAN said, that, considering the state of Ireland, a much more useful and necessary Bill might have been introduced by the Government. For to bring forward a measure like the present, was to give the Irish people a stone when they asked for bread. If, however, such a measure were necessary as a popular boon, let them, in common justice and common fairness, see that the existing valuation adopted in the different unions which this Bill proposed to take as its basis, should first be made of equal force and equal stringency, and be first remodelled upon an impartial and uniform scale. This would be an absolutely indispensable preliminary to the present measure, for the poor-law rating was not made upon the same basis in any two out of the total number of unions in Ireland.

MR. J. O'CONNELL thought no hon. Member need entertain any fear of an undue extension of votes in Ireland as likely to result from this Bill. The rapid breaking down of the small ratepayers, now unfortunately going on in that country, was quite enough to guard against any very large accession to the lists of voters. Again, with respect to the towns, he was strongly of opinion that this franchise upon the eight pound rating, instead of increasing, would very much diminish the existing number of voters. It was the interest of the parties to keep the valuation down as much as possible; and certainly the advantage of the franchise would not prove a sufficient inducement to make them prefer rating, which they now strove by every possible shift to avoid. No one had more strongly censured the Government for not redeeming its past pledges to the Irish people; but he was glad to accept this measure as a step—though certainly a very small step—in the right direction. There was one excellent principle in this Bill—that was, it proposed to disconnect the franchise entirely from the tenure of the land, the unsatisfactory state of which had led to so many of the miseries of Ireland, and to so much bitterness between landlord and tenant in that country.

Leave given to bring in the Bill.

House adjourned at Nine o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, February 14, 1849.

MINUTES.] PUBLIC BILLS.—1° Real Property Transfer. 2° Insolvent Members.

PETITIONS PRESENTED. By Mr. Bright, from a Meeting held in the Fitzroy Temperance Hall, St. Marylebone, for a Better Observance of the Lord's Day.—By Mr. W. Evans, from Brailsford, in the County of Devon, against Endowing the Roman Catholic Clergy.—By Mr. Miles, from George Anthony Denison, M. A., Vicar of East Brent, Somerset, for an Alteration of the Present System of Education.—By Lord Marcus Hill, from the Hon. Sir Richard Broun, Bt., of Brompton, London, for the Production of a certain Correspondence respecting the Halifax and Quebec Railway.—By Mr. Anstey, from James Stephenson, a Prisoner, of the Court of Chancery, in Lincoln Castle, for Inquiry respecting his Imprisonment for Alleged Contempt of Court.—By Mr. William Fagan, from the Cork Harbour Commissioners, in favour of the Light Dues Bill (1847-8).—By Mr. W. Miles, from William Mansfield, of Stapleton, Gloucestershire, complaining of Dismissal from his Situation.—By Mr. Alexander Hastie, from the Directors of the Chamber of Commerce, of the City of Glasgow, against the Merchant Seamen's Fund Bill (1847-8).—By Mr. Wawn, from South Shields, and several other Places, against a Repeal of the Navigation Laws.—By Mr. W. Miles, from the Guardians of the Bedminster Union, respecting the Poor Law as it affects that Union.—By Mr. Grogan Morgan, from the Division of Tacumshane, Wexford Union, for Amendment of the Poor Law (Ireland); and in favour of the Establishment of District Fever Hospitals.—By Mr. Bright, from the Inhabitants of Alton, and its Neighbourhood, for the Abolition of Capital Punishment.—By Mr. Anstey, from Limerick, for a Better Regulation of the Salmon Fisheries (Ireland).—From John Wroe, a Chancery Suitor, four years and a half a Prisoner in Lincoln Castle, for Inquiry into his Case.—By Mr. Hollond, from Hastings and St. Leonard's, for Referring War Disputes to Arbitration.

INSOLVENT MEMBERS BILL.

MR. MOFFATT said, the Bill of which he now rose to propose the second reading, was one of common sense and common honesty. It was one intended to apply to all Members of the House the same principles which were now applied to a certain class, and it proposed to withdraw from all Members of this House the privilege of not being compelled to pay their debts, which other members of society had not. In introducing this Bill to the House, he had been especially careful to preserve the privileges of the House. He had framed it, as far as possible, on the model of the Act of 1812; and he therefore need not say that it did not interfere with the inviolability of Members' persons from arrest. The principle which he did apply had been found to work well in all cases relating to acts of bankruptcy, and he now proposed to apply the same principle to Members of the House who were not tradesmen. He thought, therefore, there could be no objection to the general principle; if there were, the House must either repeal the Act of 1812, or it must propose to maintain a distinction between those Members of the House who were traders and those who were not. He believed the House would not adopt either of those principles; and he derived a more thorough conviction of this from the fact that when he introduced a similar Bill into the House last Session, there was a general concurrence in the principle; and the only objections made were to the machinery, which he had since endeavoured to obviate. The process by which the object of the Bill was to be effected was precisely the same as that adopted in cases of bankruptcy, with this difference, that six months was now substituted for twelve, as the period during which a seat might remain vacant; because he thought it was not desirable that so long a period as the latter should be allowed to intervene before a seat could be filled up. He thought it would be needless to enter into arguments in support of the Bill. The only objection he had heard made to it was, that it did not go far enough, for many hon. Members had declared to him their entire willingness to abolish the privilege of freedom from arrest altogether. Having looked into the subject, however, he must say that he had come to be of a different opinion, and he thought that in two words he could convince the House such a step would not be desirable. If that privilege should be abolished, parties who had claims upon hon. Members might suddenly arrest them; and they all knew what an important effect such a step might have in some cases of division. Then, again, if a Member were arrested for debt, his natural course would be to petition the House, declaring that his arrest was illegal, or that the debt was not due. This petition, would, of course, be referred to the Committee of Privileges, when the whole question of the debt must be gone into; and if the Committee should decide that the debt was not due, there would be a collision between the House and the courts of law, or the sheriff's officers. He thought, therefore, it was better to preserve the privilege of freedom from arrest, while they secured themselves against all fears of its abuse by the measure which he proposed. Another objection had been urged upon him, that the measure was imperfect, by reason that it did not apply to the House of Peers. The allegation was, that if an insolvent Member of the House of Commons was to be compelled to vacate his seat, the same rule ought to apply to insolvent Members of the House of Peers. Now, in the general principle he entirely agreed; but there were two ways of doing a thing, one was a gracious way, and the other was a very ungracious one. He believed if the House of Commons were to originate such a measure in relation to the House of Peers, they would act as he was sure the House of Commons would do if the Peers had originated such a measure with regard to them—that was, to reject it altogether. They all knew that there was a hereditary jealousy between the two Houses with regard to their respective privileges. On the other hand he remembered what the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth (Sir R. Peel) said when a similar subject was before them in 1835, that there was no privilege which this House had ever given up, but the example had been invariably and immediately followed by the House of Peers. At the same time he felt convinced that if that House refused any longer to be a refuge for insolvent debtors, the House of Peers would not long strive to retain for itself so discreditable and disgraceful a privilege. Those were the only objections which he had heard urged against the Bill. He trusted, for the character of the House, that no difficulty would be thrown in the way of passing this Bill. Any suggestions that might render its provisions more effectual he should be happy to adopt. He would only say that his object in introducing the measure was to maintain the dignity, the independence, and the character of the House.

Sir G. GREY hoped that the House would agree to the second reading of this Bill. When a similar measure was introduced last Session, he felt it his duty to caution the House against the adoption of the Bill, because, while he concurred generally with the principle, the provisions by which it was to be carried out were so objectionable, that the House ought not to sanction the measure. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Moffatt), however, had since reconsidered the matter, and a number of objections which attached to the measure last Session had been removed in the present; and though there might be some amendments still to be made in Committee—indeed, there was one or two which he meant to propose himself—yet he would advise the House to agree to the second reading. The principle of the measure was to assimilate insolvent Members to bankrupt Members, and he thought to that principle there would be no objection. He did not think the hon. Member need have made any apology for declining to interfere with the privileges of the House of Peers, with which this House had nothing whatever to do.

Mr. BERNAL said, that last Session he had felt it his duty to object to this Bill. He considered that the Bill was then so encumbered, so loaded, he might say, with provisions, which would be found to be totally unworkable in practice, that he then felt it his duty to oppose the measure. In this Bill the principle was to be evolved, and extracted from its details. He did not mean to oppose the second reading, but he warned the House, and he warned his right hon. Friend (Sir G. Grey), that the details here were all important. In particular there was one clause which provided that a seat must be left vacant for six months from the time when a creditor applies to the Court of Insolvency for a vesting order on the insolvent's property. How far that was right to the constituencies of the country, he would leave to this House to determine; but he warned this House to look at the Bill with great caution and jealousy. It was all very fine to say, let us be moral, let us be just, let us act right; but, on the other hand, let them beware that, under cover of this justice and morality, they did not commit great injustice both to Members and constituencies. He held it as an axiom that a man might be poor, and yet just; that he might be very opulent, and yet immoral.

Mr. GOULBURN said, he did not intend to offer any opposition to the second reading of this Bill, but there were many points which required the serious consideration of the House. The hon. Member (Mr. Moffatt) who introduced the measure, had rather addressed himself to answering objections which had been urged against it, than to stating reasons in its favour; but as the Bill was altogether different from that of last Session, he (Mr. Goulburn) was of opinion that the hon. Gentleman should have stated some cogent reasons for its adoption by that House. The hon. Member's Bill was at variance with its provisions, for he said that he confined it to persons having privilege of Parliament, but it was confined to Members of the House of Commons. In former times the privileges of Parliament extended far beyond what they were at present. There was the privilege of not being sued in any court, which it was found necessary to abolish, and a Bill was introduced rendering peers and commoners equally suable. Under the statutes of Will. III. and Geo. III. the diminution of the privilege was applied equally to Members of both branches of the Legislature. He was quite ready to admit that the circumstances which originally led to the general exemption of Members of the two Houses of Parliament from arrest, had become altered by the state of the law. When persons were arrestable on mesne process, there was a ready mode of preventing the attendance of any Member in his place in Parliament, by swearing to the debt, and confining him for a limited time until he obtained security to answer for the action, and that power might be used to prevent the attendance of Members, and might become a political engine for carrying measures in the House by a particular party. The abolition of arrest on mesne process, therefore, materially diminished the bad effect that might have resulted from the existence of the privilege, and arrest was now limited merely to cases where judgment had been obtained against the debtor. Although it was extremely desirable that they should preserve the character of the House by not allowing an insolvent debtor to be free from the general provisions of the law which applied to other insolvent debtors, yet he confessed himself extremely averse to making a particular provision for Members of Parliament in a particular situation; and if they were to legislate, he would much rather that legislation were directed to place Members of Parliament in the situation in which other members of society were placed, than to make a particular provision as to them. But in so doing, this circumstance must not be overlooked—that you added to the natural disposition of the creditor to recover that which was demanded, a strong political object, which might be attained by the enforcement of the demand. You did not in the case of a Member of Parliament merely apply the ordinary motives which a creditor had to enforce his demands; but you might discredit the character of an eminent Parliamentary leader—you might render it impossible for a man to render a service to his country—if you did not take care to guard against the vexatious use which might be made of a power of this kind. There had been men in the first stations who had been deeply involved in debt; there had been parties opposed to them when party spirit had been high, who would have been willing to avail themselves of the difficulties of the individual, caused often by the nature of the office he had held, to render that individual useless. These were considerations which must not be omitted, when you came to a consideration of the details of this question, which, upon the whole, he looked at as a question of Parliamentary privilege. It was one over which they themselves had the absolute power, without any interference with another branch of the Legislature; and if they looked at the proceedings of Parliament in antecedent times, they would find numberless instances in which Members had been arrested in consequence of judgments having been pronounced against them: sometimes they had been discharged by the House, and sometimes they had been permitted to remain in confinement on account of the debts for which judgments had been obtained against them. And there was this advantage in dealing with the question as a matter of resolution of the House, rather than by Act of Parliament, that if they passed an Act of Parliament, and they found by the provisions of the Act that their measure interfered with the proper discharge of the duties which were owing to the country by a Member of Parliament, they had no power of altering it without the interference of the other branch of the Legislature; whereas, if the matter were left to the discretion of the House, and they found any evils arising, they might make a modification of their resolution so as to meet those evils. He said not one word as to the general details of the Bill; it was in many respects undoubtedly extremely defective. It had a tendency to place the House of Commons in direct collision with their constituency, and was open to various other objections. He was only anxious on this occasion to throw out, for the consideration of those who took an interest in the particular Bill, the general line of objection.

MR. J. WILLIAMS said, that the Members of the House were much indebted to the hon. Member for Dartmouth (Mr. Moffatt), and nothing would tend so much to elevate the character of the House as the passing of this Bill; and he hoped he would extend the same principle to the other branch of the Legislature. At an election, if any Gentleman holding a seat in the House was found giving the smallest sum of money or treating, he was in danger of losing his seat; and, at the same time, he had the privilege of committing other acts equally objectionable. He hoped the Government would pass the Bill, and extend the principle to the other House of Parliament.

MR. HENLEY was anxious that the second reading should be postponed, that more time might be given for consideration before the House assented to the principle on which the Bill proceeded. The only ground which had been laid before the House, or rather the main ground, was to assimilate the case of those who were called insolvent persons with traders; but the cases were not at all analogous. The bankrupt laws were passed for the protection of persons in trade, who, from unforeseen circumstances, became unable to pay their debts, and, upon surrendering their property, received a discharge in full from all their creditors for the future. That was not the case with an insolvent. A bankrupt received his certificate, and became a clear man to be elected to this House; his debts were for ever gone. Not so with the insolvent. A man, for whatever imprudence or whatever cause he might have become insolvent, could not get clear under the insolvent court. It was true that they could take his property as effectually as in the case of bankruptcy, but they could not give him a discharge; and therefore there was a great difference in the two cases—the trader being a bankrupt could be elected—the insolvent could not be elected unless he had paid all his debts in full. A Bill of this sort depended upon its details. It seemed to be the opinion of the House that the second reading ought not to be opposed, and therefore he should not take upon himself the responsibility of that course. This privilege was not a privilege of Members; it was a privilege of constituents. That ought never to be lost sight of; and if they were going to exclude a certain class of persons in whom the constituency chose to repose their confidence, the House might get into squabbles from parties being continually re-elected, which it was not convenient to bring themselves into.

Bill read a second time.

MR. GREENE suggested whether it might not be desirable to refer the whole subject to a Select Committee, for them to report upon it.

MR. EWART hoped that the hon. Member (Mr. Moffatt), who had introduced the Bill, would not consent to the proposal of the hon. Member for Lancaster (Mr. Greene), and refer it to a Committee upstairs. Investigation was much demanded by the public; he thought it a very reasonable proposition that the Bill should be postponed; but not that it should be referred to a Committee upstairs.

MR. W. MILES hoped that the right hon. Baronet (Sir G. Grey) would introduce the amendments some time before the Bill came into discussion. He could not conceive that it was the intention of Government to pass a Bill of this kind as it stood at present.

SIR G. GREY said, that the amendments would be introduced before the discussion on the Bill.

MR. MOFFATT objected to sending the Bill to a Committee upstairs; but he did not object to postpone it for a fortnight.

Committed for February 28th.

NAVIGATION LAWS.

The Order of the Day for the Committee on the Navigation Laws having been read: On the question that Mr. Speaker do leave the chair,

MR. GLADSTONE said: I am sorry to interpose, for a few moments, between the House and the discussion which is coming on, and I do so only for the purpose of putting a question to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Labouchere) the President of the Board of Trade, or the noble Lord at the head of the Government, on a matter which I take to involve a principle of the highest public importance, or I should not trespass on the House. I will make no other statement than is necessary.

MR. SPEAKER: Does it relate to the navigation laws?

MR. GLADSTONE: It does; and I will make no other statement than is absolutely necessary to make the question intelligible. It arises out of a speech reported in the *Morning Post*, to which my attention has been called within the last two or three days, and which purports to have been delivered by the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Baines), a more manly and straightforward speech than which was never spoken, in which the hon. Gentleman explains himself to his constituents on the subject of the navigation laws. The hon. Gentleman is reported, in the *Morning Post* of the 9th February, to have used these words :—

> "Then there was the subject of the navigation laws. It is perfectly well known that Ministers introduced a measure with respect to that Bill, against which I voted. I divided against Ministers in every stage of that Bill. I thought it my duty to do so, and although I differ from many of my constituents on this point—gentlemen of very great intelligence—who think that the navigation laws ought to be repealed, yet I must say I am not satisfied that they ought to be repealed. On the contrary, I am of opinion that the principle of the navigation laws ought not to be repealed. This being so, I voted accordingly, and opposed Ministers in every stage."

And it appears, on reference to the division lists, that the hon. Gentleman did oppose Ministers in one of the divisions which took place as to the question of time, and on the only division as to the merits of the measure. I have no means of knowing whether the report is a perfectly correct report or not. It is a question of the utmost public importance. I do not wish to provoke a discussion on the principle which is involved. I hope the answer which I may receive will be such as entirely to remove any further discussion; but the question I have to put is, whether the measure which was recommended from the Throne by Her Majesty, and which is to-day to be introduced by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, will have the support of those Members of this House who hold office under the Crown?

LORD J. RUSSELL: In answer to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone), I will state the facts as they have occurred. The hon. Gentleman now at the head of the Poor Law Board (Mr. Baines) was offered by me, in the name of Her Majesty, the office which he now holds. He declined to take it. He said that he should be ready to take the office, but that he could not do so, if he were not to be at liberty to oppose the repeal of the navigation laws, his opinion being against that repeal, and he having already voted in conformity with that opinion. My answer to him was, that I considered his services of such importance that I should not in any way interfere with the free exercise of his opinion and his vote on the subject, understanding from him, as I did, that upon every other subject he agreed with the views that Her Majesty's Government entertained. I know not whether it is necessary, as the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) has spoken of the conduct of such a proceeding, that I should mention that, a good many years ago, the hon. Member for Montgomeryshire accepted office, but having always voted against the Alien Bill, he did, after accepting office, vote against the policy of the Government. I remember, likewise, that on a question of very great importance, the repeal of the Roman Catholic Disabilities Bill, Lord Lonsdale, holding the office of Privy Councillor, voted against the repeal, and yet continued to hold office. It will not be denied that the Duke of Wellington, who was then at the head of the Administration, exercised a right discretion in allowing Lord Lonsdale to hold office. He (Lord J. Russell) mentioned those as instances that had occurred within his own recollection, and the cases were as he stated. He had now described the circumstances connected with the hon. Member referred to (Mr. Baines), and he should only add, with regard to the other Members of Her Majesty's Government, that they had all voted last year in favour of the measure for the repeal of the navigation laws, and that the rule which applied to the hon. Member for Hull did not extend to any other Member of the Government.

The House then went into Committee: Mr. BERNAL in the chair.

MR. LABOUCHERE said: Mr. Bernal, the duty has again devolved upon me of calling the attention of the House to the laws which regulate the navigation of this country, and I rejoice that I am able to do so at such a period of the Session as will insure to the House a full opportunity of discussing this important question, and which, I trust, may lead to the solution of a problem, which, I am sure, cannot be longer left undecided without producing consequences most injurious to the commercial and colonial interests of this empire. We had long discussions upon this subject during the last Session of Parliament; and, although they did not lead to any practical conclusion, yet I trust the time devoted by the House to the question has not been altogether lost. I trust we shall be able to approach the discussion this Session, having already cleared away many preliminaries; and Parliament having then expressed an opinion upon points on which this measure mainly rests, we shall, I hope, be prepared, without any protracted preliminary discussions, to approach the question which it will be my duty to submit to the House to-day. I am glad that the country and the colonies have had time to consider this question, the magnitude of which I am not disposed to underrate to the House. I am glad that the House will have to discuss and to decide upon it after the country and the more distant branches of the empire have had an opportunity of forming their judgments and expressing their opinions on it to the House. Under these circumstances, I shall at once proceed to state the case within the briefest possible limits that I can. And I will remind the House, in as few words as possible, what were the principal provisions of the measure which I had the honour to propose last Session, and what were the principal reasons by which it was supported. Sir, with regard to one great branch of the navigation laws—I mean that which regulates the coasting trade and fisheries of the country—I did not propose in the measure of last year, with the exception of a modification in the laws that relate to the fisheries, to which it is not necessary that I should more particularly advert, to make any alteration. I shall have occasion to return to this part of the subject hereafter; but at the present moment, when merely reminding the House of the provisions of the Bill of last Session, it is not necessary that I should say more. I stated, at that time to the House, that I considered our navigation laws to rest upon three main principles—to borrow an expression from the right hon. Member for Stamford (Mr. Herries)—three fundamental principles. The first of these, is that part of the navigation laws the object of which is to secure to this country a monopoly of our colonial trade. The next is, that which attempts to secure to this country what is called the long-voyage trade. The third is, that part of the navigation laws which attempts to secure to this country what is called the carrying or indirect European trade. Now, with respect to the first of these, I then stated to the House, and I now repeat that statement, that it did appear to me that, after the policy which this House had adopted with reference to free trade—after depriving our colonies of the protection which secured to them the markets of this country—be that policy right or wrong, which on the present occasion we are not called upon to discuss—but believing, as I do, that the great majority of this House I am now addressing, are not prepared to retrace their steps upon it, seeing that the protection which our colonies had heretofore enjoyed in the markets of the mother country had been gradually but finally and entirely withdrawn; it appeared to me, under these circumstances, the height of injustice to refuse to the colonies the withdrawal of those restrictions upon their navigation, under which they had always chafed. When we tell them, that neither for their benefit nor protection shall the restrictions which hitherto secured to them our markets be continued, it would be the height of intolerable injustice to maintain those restrictions upon their trade which prevent them from enjoying the advantages of foreigners—an injustice which I think absolutely incompatible with the continued connexion between the most important of our colonies and the mother country. These were the arguments, which I stated at much greater length and with more minute detail than I shall now use. I produced complaints that we had received from Canada and the West Indies; communications from Lord Harris, the Governor of Trinidad, telling the Government what advantages would result to the trade of that island, and especially the sugar growing, if the navigation laws were so altered as to allow them to trade directly with France and Spain. These were the circumstances which I stated during the last Session, and of which I beg to remind the House on the present occasion; and I ask whether, as our colonial empire developes itself—as New Zealand and Australia become flourishing and mercantile communities—it is to be supposed that these communities of Englishmen will rest satisfied with restrictions of this description? and is it not part of true wisdom, in time, before exasperation prevails, before irritation has grown up, to look forward and place this question upon a footing that we can justly maintain with regard to the claims and complaints of our colonists? With regard to these complaints the interval which has been allowed to elapse since last Session has only brought additional proof of their sentiments upon the subject. I hope the attention of the Committee has been given to the important documents which were lately laid upon the table of this House, relating particularly to the colony of the Canadas. The evils which that colony feels from the restrictions imposed upon her by the navigation laws are there set forth, as well as the anxiety of her inhabitants for the speedy removal of them; and the opinion of the Earl of Elgin is given that those restrictions should be removed without delay, and as speedily as possible, which affect revenue and trade under the present system of our navigation laws. There is one document to which I would most particularly call the attention of the House. It is a statement of the most striking description, sent to the Secretary of State for the Colonies by Lord Elgin. It was made to Lord Elgin by gentlemen whom he describes as the most active and intelligent merchants of Montreal, who tell him that they had attempted to trade with what is called the far west of North America, which means the lakes and the western States of the Union, as well as of our territories in North America. They called the attention of Lord Elgin to this point; and they said they would be able, even with their natural disadvantages, to compete successfully with New York in the supply of the far west, if they were not impeded by the navigation laws. They express their confident opinion, founded upon the instances which they give, that if those restrictions were removed, it would be in the power of the inhabitants of Montreal and other places in Canada to compete with New York in the supplies for the States of Ohio and Illinois, and the great lakes of the west. That is proof irrefragable—proof which I defy hon. Gentlemen to controvert, that if, as far as Canada is concerned, we give up these navigation laws, we shall confer a boon of incalculable value on our North American colonists, and rivet them by ties of gratitude to the mother country, in a manner in which I am satisfied no other course we could pursue could equally effect. I stated at the outset that I thought there had been advantages in the delay which had taken place on this occasion; but, speaking for Canada, I cannot contemplate that delay without the greatest possible regret. We ought to be sensible of the patience and good feeling which the people of Canada have shown under the most trying circumstances; and we should ill repay that patience and good feeling, if we did not embrace the earliest opportunity and show ourselves anxious to set right a system so impolitic and unjust; which destroys the trade of our own North American colonies; which destroys the trade of the inhabitants of the United States of America, for no earthly object; which diverts the trade from Canada to the United States of America, without effecting any benefit in return; and which injures the revenue of Canada, by preventing the full use and employment of those canals which have been made there at so great an outlay, but which are now completely useless and unproductive, and must remain so as long as we keep up our navigation laws: for at present the rates of freight from Quebec are very far higher than from the United States. This branch of the subject, Sir, is one of very great importance; but I shall not go at any great length further with it. I shall merely read an extract from the document to which I have already referred. It is a statement made to the Inspector General of the province, Mr. Hincks, by a most respectable and enterprising mercantile firm in Montreal, Messrs. Holmes, Young, and Knapp, and is enclosed in a letter to Earl Grey from Lord Elgin, which runs thus:—

> "My Lord—I have the honour to transmit, for your information, the copy of a letter addressed to Mr. Hincks, the Inspector General of this province, showing the results of the efforts made during the past season by a most respectable and enterprising mercantile house in this city to open a trade with the far west for the introduction, by the route of the St. Lawrence, of various articles which have hitherto been supplied exclusively through the Mississippi or the Erie Canal. Your Lordship will not fail to observe how formidable an obstacle the existing navigation laws oppose to the establishment of a trade which is calculated to prove so beneficial both to Canada and the mother country.—I have, &c., (signed) ELGIN and KINCARDINE."

I shall not read the whole of the letter of Messrs. Holmes, Young, and Knapp. It describes the obstacles in the way of their trade. But the two last paragraphs I shall beg leave to read to the House:—

> "We have now an order for 250 tons of Scotch pig iron for Chicago, and doubt not that large quantities will be required at the different American ports on the western lakes the coming season; but we find our hands completely tied, and our efforts paralysed, by the operation of these obnoxious navigation laws; but for them we should unquestionably be able to supply Upper Canada with all the products of the West Indies on cheaper terms than now that section of the province is supplied from New York; and we should be able to send our own products not only to our own but to foreign West India islands, where large quantities of staves, headings, hoops, &c., for the sugar and molasses trade, are annually sent by our neighbours; and we have latterly brought in from the State of Maine samples of what are called shooks—that is, such articles put up in compact and portable form—and solicited tenders from owners of sawmills and coopers to supply such here, and we find we can supply and ship all the articles required for that trade cheaper than the same articles can be shipped from Maine or Massachusetts to the West Indies. Last fall we sent orders to Cuba for three cargoes of sugar and molasses, provided prices came within our limit; such was the case; but no British vessel could be found to load for Montreal. Americans could be found in abundance ready to load on terms nearly as low as for New York; but then, thanks to our navigation laws, they could not come up our river with foreign produce. Well,

> our sugars and molasses go to New York, there to pay a transit duty (small though it be), and to be subjected to all the costs and delays of an inland communication through the United States to Canada; the result is, that Canadians pay dearer than if the navigation laws did not exist, as now they stand, for their sugar; but we cannot see what benefit is conferred upon the British shipowner by the restriction."

Sir, the next and main principle of the navigation laws to which I adverted in introducing the measure of last Session, includes those restrictions which were intended to secure to British vessels the long-voyage trade, by not allowing foreign produce to be brought to British ports except in British vessels. I will not do more on the present occasion than advert to the arguments which I have before submitted to the House in favour of the removal of those restrictions. It appeared, and does appear to me, that a system of restrictions which shuts out the raw produce, while at the same time it admits the same when introduced in the manufactured state, is neither more nor less than giving a direct encouragement to our foreign rivals in manufactures at the expense of our own manufacturing interests. To prohibit the import of mahogany while we freely admit furniture—to prevent American cotton from being imported from a European port, but to allow American cotton goods to come in—to forbid sheep's wool from being introduced, but to allow woollen manufactures to come in—these are regulations which, appearing as they do to invert the first principles of commercial policy, only require, I think, to be laid before the House to secure the voice of Parliament against their being allowed to continue on the Statute-book. Sir, the third of the main and fundamental principles upon which our present system is founded, consists of those restrictions which attempt to secure to this country the carrying on indirect European trade. Now, with regard to this portion of the navigation laws, I must remind the House that it involves a policy which can only be successful so long as it is confined to ourselves, and so long as foreign nations acquiesce in it. But if foreign nations choose to imitate our policy, and insist on trying to confine their own carrying trade to their own shipping, then we should gain nothing by the rule; but, on the contrary, as the greatest mercantile and maritime nation in the world, we should infallibly be the greatest losers in a game in which all must lose something. But no man can have adverted to the indications of the policy of foreign countries in this respect without being convinced that they are quite alive to the injustice of this system, and equally determined, if we mean to keep our carrying trade to ourselves, that they will keep their carrying trade to themselves. Now, Sir, I ventured last Session to state to the House the situation in which we stand with regard to Prussia in this respect. I know that hon. Gentlemen on that occasion treated with great levity the menaces of Prussia. But I believe that the policy of Prussia, in this respect, will be the policy of the whole of Germany; and I submit that nothing can be more unwise and impolitic than to treat lightly threats of the nature in question. But is it Prussia alone whom we must expect to find holding this language towards us? Let me call the attention of the House to our relations with another country, the importance of our trade with which no one will deny—I mean Russia. Indeed, few trades are more important to this country, or more reciprocally beneficial, than that which is carried on between Great Britain and Russia. The latter abounds to the greatest extent in raw materials—the former is the great seat of manufactures. The two countries seem thus formed by nature to conduct a great and a mutually beneficial trade. Well, we have a treaty of commerce with Russia. It is dated 1843, is intended to remain in force for ten years, and of course will expire in 1853. By that treaty Russia has engaged, with some trifling restrictions, to admit British ships into her ports on equal terms with her own ships; therefore, of course, she cannot retaliate upon us so long as that treaty remains in force. But, then, what is our conduct? We apply to the Russian trade the restriction of this portion of our navigation laws. At present an English ship may convey a cargo of sugar from Cuba to St. Petersburg; but a Russian ship cannot bring a cargo from Cuba to London. We can take a cargo of enumerated articles from any port to Riga; but a Russian cannot take such a cargo to Liverpool. Now, is it likely that Russia will allow such a state of things to continue? But we are not left to conjecture. What has she actually done? Why, in 1845, two years after the signing of the treaty, there was issued a ukase, placing high differential duties on the cargoes of the ships of all those nations which did not put Russian vessels on the same footing with national vessels; and no doubt can exist but that when our treaty expires, the ground which Prussia is taking will also be taken by Russia against us. Will it not then be much better, instead of waiting until a period when we shall have to discuss the subject with feelings of irritation and bitterness, and perhaps, too, at a very inconvenient time—will it not be much wiser and more consistent with true dignity—by a timely concession—not to the demands of Prussia or of Russia, but to the claims of equity, of justice, and of true and enlightened policy—will it not be better and wiser at once to place the laws in question upon a consistent and rational footing, than by delaying to take such a step in time, to invoke upon ourselves the evils which postponement will necessarily bring? I might go on through a long list of countries in reference to which we are similarly situated, but it would be unnecessarily delaying the House. I think I have said enough to show that this principle, which is a fundamental principle of the navigation laws, is one which cannot be maintained without seriously compromising our commercial relations with other countries. My object was merely to point out what must be the infallible consequence of maintaining that fundamental principle. There are, then, as I stated—setting aside for a moment all considerations of the coasting trade and the fisheries—three main principles on which the system of the navigation laws rests; and I proposed in the course of last Session, and I now propose again, to repeal those restrictions, leaving, however, to the Queen in Council a power—not necessarily to be exercised, but still a power which we think ought to be retained—of re-enacting these laws, wholly or in part, with regard to any countries as to which the Government may think fit that they should be preserved. Connected with the navigation laws, there are other questions, relating to the registry of ships, which it will be necessary for the House to deal with in conjunction with the main point. Without going into the details of these questions, I may remind the House that the main alteration which I proposed last Session was to entitle a foreign-built ship to a British register, if British owned and British manned—a proposal which would go to break down the monopoly at present existing in the shipbuilding trade in the united kingdom. Now, without anticipating discussion upon this point, I must say that subsequent reflection has tended more and more to deepen the conviction which I entertained and expressed last Session that that most important trade—that trade which I value as deeply as any one—the trade of shipbuilding in England and her dependencies, has nothing to fear from the change which I now propose. Since the subject was last discussed here, I have looked over, with the most anxious attention, the mass of additional information taken before the Committee of the House of Lords. I have, I repeat, looked narrowly into that evidence, and I believe that no one can do so without arriving at the conclusion that of all the trades in the world there is not one in which we can more certainly and successfully compete with foreigners than in this of shipbuilding. Indeed, I cannot imagine on what grounds anything like apprehension in this respect is felt. If I look to all the elements of success—if I compare the United States—our most formidable rival in everything mercantile—with our own position, what result do I find as respects all the main articles used in shipbuilding—the articles of iron, of copper, of sailcloth? Why, Sir, I find that all these articles are supplied to America by us, and that they consequently must be cheaper here. I find, that with regard to cordage, we have the advantage by 10 per cent. I find that with regard to timber — taking the authority of Mr. Money Wigram — that we are on an equality with the States. As to labour, we are also on an equality, as far as wages are concerned; but I must allow that there is a point connected with labour upon which that gentleman states that we are not upon an equality; and I am afraid that the statement which he makes upon this point is correct. To it, then, I beg for a moment to call the attention of the Committee. Mr. Money Wigram states, that the wages of labour for shipbuilding are very much the same as in London. But there is this difference—a shipwright in the United States gives his whole day's work for his wages. A shipwright in London works as a combination man. Now, will the House say, for one moment, that the trade of the country is to be burdened—our commercial relations embarrassed—and mercantile difficulties allowed to spring up, in order to protect a combination amongst the shipwrights of London? Will this be one of the arguments urged upon me to show that we cannot compete with the Americans? No, Sir, the true remedy for such a state of things — for this unfair attempt to render labour dearer and more unprofitable for employers — is to introduce the competition of others, working under no such factitious disadvantages. Sir, there is another point on which I am aware that hon. Gentlemen maintain that our shipbuilders are subject to great disadvantages, and on which I am' anxious to say a word—I allude to the duties upon the importation into this country of timber used in shipbuilding. Now I at once admit that it would be to me a matter of great satisfaction, could my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer tell us that he could spare the money levied upon the timber imported. There are few things which would be more useful to the trade of this country than a remission of these duties. But I must deny that they stand in the way of the House taking the step which I have now to recommend. And now I will again appeal, for I like—when possible, to do so—to the evidence of gentlemen who disagree with me on the question of the navigation laws; and in doing so, I can cite no more respectable or intelligent witness than Mr. Money Wigram—a gentleman who is one of the largest shipowners and shipbuilders in the world; and a gentleman of whom I must say, differing in opinion with him as I do, that he gave his evidence before the House of Lords in the most frank and candid spirit. Now, this is what Mr. Wigram says as to the effect of the duties on timber in raising the price of shipbuilding in England:—

> "The amount of duty payable upon these articles is trifling, and does not form any material consideration; it is about 3*s.* 8*d.* per ton on a Thames-built and equipped merchant ship of about 691 tons."

3*s.* 8*d.* per ton! I venture to affirm that the duty paid on iron by the Prussian shipbuilders more than compensates for the duty paid by the British shipbuilder on wood. Besides, upon many of the most valuable woods there is no duty. On mahogany—now used for many shipbuilding purposes—there is no duty. There is no duty on teak and on other valuable woods, so that it was quite a mistake to run away with the notion that these duties on foreign timber furnish an argument of material consequence for the British shipbuilders to urge against any change in the navigation laws; and to demonstrate this the more fully, I will quote the evidence of another gentleman, whom I highly respect, but one who is known to be one of the most ardent and persevering opponents of the measure which I have now to propose—I allude to Mr. George Frederick Young, late a Member of this House. In 1847, when he was examined before a Committee of the House of Commons, in answer to a question as to whether he thought the increased duty on timber was not an additional cost to the shipowner, he replied—

> "I do not, because I think the quantity of foreign timber used in shipbuilding bears but a very small proportion to the whole."

The next alteration which I proposed last year was the exemption of shipowners from that obligation to which they are now subject, of taking a certain number of apprentices. This is a point on which shipowners have been continually complaining, and I think it highly proper that, at a time when we are making the changes which I now propose, they should be relieved of the obligation which presses upon them. These, then, were the outlines of the measure which I last year proposed. I proposed to repeal the three main principles of the navigation laws—the restrictions on the carrying trade, the restrictions on the colonial trade, and the restrictions which go to ensure the long-voyage trade, at the same time doing away with the laws relative to registration, in order to allow the British shipowner to purchase his vessel from the foreign shipbuilder; proposing, at the same time, to reserve to the Queen in Council the power which I had stated. Now, Sir, I have, since last Session, in conjunction with Her Majesty's Government, carefully considered the objections which were made to this Bill, with an earnest desire to adopt any suggestions which appeared to us to be an improvement upon the original scheme. The objectors to that measure may be divided into two classes: the first class headed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Stamford (Mr. Herries), objecting altogether to the principle of the measure which I introduced. That right hon. Gentleman embodied his opinion in a resolution, in which he stated, that although he was willing to consider any partial inconvenience which may have arisen under the present system of the navigation laws, yet that to the fundamental principle of these laws he must give in his decided adherence. Sir, I thanked the right hon. Gentleman for so frankly expressing the opinion which he entertained; but I could not hope then, or since, to remove the objections which he felt to the scheme which I had the honour to propose. I heartily rejoiced, however, when, by a decided majority, the House of Commons negatived the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, and asserted its opinion, and affirmed its determination, to examine the principles of the navigation laws themselves, and to consider whether they might not be greatly modified for the promotion of those interests which they professed in their integrity to advance. Now, I have not considered the Bill which I am now to propose, with any hope of removing the objections of the right hon. Gentleman; but at the same time I assure him, that I will most willingly listen to and anxiously consider any suggestion which he, or those who think with him, may throw out, and which I shall consider to be compatible with the spirit and the main object of the measure before us. But objections were taken to the measure last year in a very different spirit, and from a very different quarter. There were hon. Members who approved of the principle of the measure; who believed that the time was come for the thorough revision and reform of the fundamental principles of the navigation laws; but who, nevertheless, took exception to portions of the measure which I introduced. Sir, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Oxford (Mr. Gladstone) supported in a most able speech the general principles of the Bill, but admitted that upon some points he entertained great doubts. And this consideration brings me back to a part of the subject to which I adverted in the commencement of my speech, and to which I feel bound to recall the attention of the House—I allude to the coasting trade. The right hon. Gentleman stated, and stated I think with great force, that by maintaining unimpaired the restrictions which the navigation laws imposed upon our coasting trade, we were placing ourselves at great disadvantage in treating with foreign countries, and endeavouring to induce them to relax their navigation laws in our favour. The right hon. Gentleman adverted to the case of the United States. What, he argued, could be more absurd than that while you propose to allow the American to engage in your foreign and colonial trade, you should yet, by maintaining these restrictions, by preventing the American from sharing your coasting trade—a trade in which it is scarcely possible that he can injure you—debar yourselves from asking for that which would be the true counterpart of your colonial trade. Sir, said the right hon. Gentleman, how important is the trade along the coast of America. It is, in fact, a trade more of the nature of a foreign and a colonial traffic, than of a coasting traffic. Consider the variety of productions along the far-extended shores of America, and consider the difference between Massachusetts, and Carolina, and Louisiana. Sir, I own I felt it difficult to meet that argument. I felt its force extremely, and I certainly do think that if we were to make some change in the regulations of our coasting trade, and that if our colonies evinced a disposition to throw open their coasting trade to the United States, that then we shall have a very fair claim to ask the United States to admit our ships to participate in their coasting trade. Indeed, to say that a voyage from Malta to London is to be held part of a colonial trade, while a voyage from California to New York is to be held part of a coasting trade—to maintain this, I think, would be to maintain a proposition so preposterous and unjust, that I do not believe that the United States would persist in a policy so contrary to the dictates of justice and common sense. But, Sir, I felt it to be my duty, in considering this part of the subject, to endeavour to ascertain whether it might not be possible to meet the difficulties which were felt at the time with respect to opening the coasting trade. I allude, in the first place, to the alarm which at that period existed among persons in the seafaring population; and, in the next, to the danger which was apprehended to the revenue by allowing foreign nations indiscriminately to engage in our coasting trade. I trust, Sir, that the consideration I have given to this measure has been such as to enable me to propose a measure which, while it does not imply a total abolition of the restrictions now imposed on foreigners, will effect a modification in them, and which, at the same time, will enable us to get, without cavil or hesitation, such a measure from the United States as the important mercantile interests of this country demand, without exposing the revenue to danger, or exciting alarm amongst those engaged in the coasting trade of this country. Now, there are two branches of the coasting trade, which, although they go by the same name, are yet essentially distinct from each other. There is the trade—conducted, principally, either by steamboats or small vessels—consisting in the carrying of goods and passengers to and fro, and depending, as may naturally be supposed, intimately upon local connexion with the places between which the trade is conducted. With that trade, even if it were thrown open to them, I do not believe foreigners could compete; but, acting on the principle of not unnecessarily exciting alarm, or of disturbing existing relations, it is not proposed to throw open that trade to foreign competition. I propose, Sir, to keep that particular description of coasting trade which consists of passing from one port of the united kingdom to another, on the same footing on which it now is. At present these restrictions on the coasting trade are imposed on our own vessels as well as on those of foreign countries. A British ship cannot combine the foreign with the coasting trade—a coasting voyage with a foreign voyage. She must make her election. She cannot clear out from Hull to go abroad, and in the first instance carry a cargo to London. The regulation in this respect was made for the supposed security of revenue. Now, when I propose to abolish this restriction, as far as foreign ships are concerned, I am prepared, *à fortiori*, to abolish it with respect to the vessels of our own country. I do not propose that either a foreign vessel or an English vessel foreign bound shall be allowed to proceed from port to port in England, and then return; but that, sailing from a British port, and being bound for a foreign port, they shall be permitted to carry from one British port to another, and then clear out and proceed on their foreign voyage. I may inform the House that I have been in communication with the officers of the Board of Customs, and they have satisfied me that this can be done consistently with safety to the revenue, provided the restriction be imposed that the cargoes shall not be carried in vessels under one hundred tons burden. This latter restriction has been imposed to relieve any apprehensions that English ships might obtain facilities for smuggling by having high duty goods on board, professedly for shipment to foreign ports, but, in point of fact, designed for our own ports. But I do not myself believe that such facilities for conducting the coasting trade in England would be taken advantage of either by the ships of our own or of foreign nations to any considerable extent. I think that the light-dues and other charges to which the coasting trade is subject, are such as to prevent, except in a very few instances, either English or foreign vessels conducting the coasting trade for such purposes. These modifications, which I think may be adopted with safety, will, I trust, altogether meet the argument which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Oxford (Mr. Gladstone) pressed upon me last year —namely, that by withholding privileges we were refusing to the United States what would be considered advantages by them, and depriving ourselves of advantages with respect to the coasting trade to which we thought we were entitled. Sir, these are the only alterations of any consequence which I propose to make in the measure which I laid before the House during the last Session. There are some minor modifications in the Bill, which rather involve the manner in which it shall be carried out, than any alteration in its substance; but these are the only important alterations which have been introduced. There were many points raised in the discussion of last year to which I will not now advert, as I believe there is a general desire on the part of the House to allow this resolution to pass without indulging in a protracted discussion on the details of the measure, which can be reserved either for the second reading, or when the Bill shall be in Committee. I have on this occasion confined myself to what I consider to be the leading provisions of the measure which I have to propose to the House.

Mr. Alderman THOMPSON asked whether any intimation had been received from the American Government as to any convention with respect to the coasting trade?

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I think I can answer the question of the hon. Member. In an interview which I had a short time ago with the American Minister, Mr. Bancroft, he spoke of his desire that such a convention should be signed. He said that he should be willing the next day to sign any convention which should include the coasting trade. I replied, that on a question of this kind, I did not think I ought to anticipate the decision of the House; that it was a question upon which Parliament should decide. But I have no doubt that Mr. Bancroft would be prepared to-morrow to give his assent to throwing open the coasting trade in the modified manner I have explained to the House. These, Sir, are the outlines of the scheme I have recommended to the adoption of the House. On the present occasion I will not enter into any of those minor points of detail for which we shall have more suitable opportunities for discussion. I will conclude, therefore, by assuring the House that if I believed, as the opponents of the Bill have stated, that the commercial opulence of this country was in the one scale, and its safety and honour in the other—if I believed this, I say, I trust that my choice would not have been doubtful. But the more I have considered this question, the more I am satisfied that those measures which, while they encourage trade, abolish useless restrictions, must infallibly increase the maritime strength, and tend to the greater security and power of this country. In particular I would entreat the attention of the House to the situation in which we stand with respect to our colonies. I implore the House not to interpose any unnecessary delay in the consideration of questions which the colonists are urging upon the attention of the House in a spirit of loyalty and affection to this country, but still in that spirit of earnestness and perseverance which the importance of the interests involved fully justifies. I confess that I am much gratified by the assurance given me by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Stamford (Mr. Herries), that it is neither his intention, nor the intention of those who act with him, to interpose any more obstruction or delay in the progress of this measure than is necessary for its full and fair consideration. I trust that our discussions on this question will be conducted throughout in a spirit of calm deliberation and fairness, and that the ultimate decision of the House will be such as to strengthen the maritime power of the country, expand its commerce, and give contentment to our colonies. Before I sit down I am reminded by an hon. Friend near me that I have omitted one or two points. There were two measures, which, although not necessarily connected with the navigation laws, yet still deeply affect the mercantile marine of this country, and with respect to which I stated, on a former occasion, the course the Government proposed to take. The first of those subjects was the question of the light-dues. In the course of the last Session, I laid on the table of the House a measure on this subject, which, with some alterations, I hope to be able successfully to introduce to the House in the present Session. The next point is also a very important and a very urgent one—I mean the question of the Merchant Seamen's Fund. I must say, that I think no question connected with our mercantile marine presses more urgently for the consideration of the Legislature than this subject of the Merchant Seamen's Fund. That fund is insolvent, and its difficulties are very much increasing; and I think that every year Parliament postpones grappling with that subject, we are increasing the difficulty of ultimate arrangement, and laying ourselves open to a burden in the end. Last Session I introduced a Bill on this subject, founded on the report of a Commission appointed to investigate the question. The inquiries of that Commission were prosecuted with great assiduity, and upon their report I founded the Bill, which I thought it only fair to bring in for the consideration of the House. In candour I am bound to say that the reception which that measure met with from the representatives of the mercantile interest in this House, and the maritime interests connected with the ports of England, was not such as to encourage me to persevere with it. Considering the feeling with which that measure was received, I felt it my duty to reconsider the subject, and I hope, in the course of the present Session, to introduce a greatly altered measure, founded on different principles, which shall combine, with a proper arrangement of the Merchant Seamen's Fund, measures for the advantage of the seafaring population of this country. I trust that I shall be able to introduce that measure at a period of the Session which will insure a full consideration of its provisions. I confess that I am not willing to lay these measures before Parliament until we have made some progress with the navigation laws, for I do not think it is expedient to throw too many measures upon the attention of the House at one time. I may also add that a noble Friend of mine, one of the Lords of the Admiralty, has, during the recess, considered the important question of the measurement of the tonnage of ships, and he trusts that in the course of this Session a measure will be prepared which will meet the objections entertained to the present system of measurement. I do not know that I can add anything to the statement which I have made, but will now conclude by moving the resolution of which I have given notice, and which is a slight modification of the resolution of last Session. I beg to move the following Resolution—

"That it is expedient to remove the restrictions which prevent the free carriage of goods by sea, to and from the United Kingdom and the British Possessions abroad; and to amend the Laws regulating the Coasting Trade of the United Kingdom; subject, nevertheless, to such control, by Her Majesty in Council, as may be necessary, and also to amend the Laws for the Registration of Ships and Seamen."

MR. BERNAL having read the resolution,

MR. HERRIES said, the resolution, accompanied by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, placed him under doubt as to the course he ought now to pursue. He had understood it was agreed upon last Session that the debate on this great national question should be allowed to be resumed this Session from the point at which it then left off. This being so, he had hoped that the principle of the measure would not have been reintroduced for discussion at this period of the proceedings. If the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Labouchere) had thought proper simply to acquaint hon. Members on his (Mr. Herries') side of the House with the addition, by way of alteration, to his measure of last Session which he had now submitted to the House, he (Mr. Herries) should have confined his observations to the new part of the question, and should not have thought it necessary to address a word to the House on those great general propositions which this question involved. But as the right hon. Gentleman had entered into so long a statement, touching the main points of the question on which they were so materially divided, he could not suffer the right hon. Gentleman's observations to pass without some notice from his side of the House; although he had no objection to allow for the present the other parts of the resolution to pass without opposition. With these views, he could not presume to detain the House very long by the observations he should make on this occasion. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Labouchere) had closed his speech with some general remarks and some general reflections, applicable to the principle of the proposed measure, which it was difficult to permit to pass unnoticed; but the notice of which must lead to much debate. But however much he was invited by that proceeding to enter into the whole field of controversy, he should not hesitate to say that, after giving the matter the most serious consideration, he had arrived at the conclusion that he should be taking the wiser course, and which was not only best suited to the convenience of that House—pledged as it was to the consideration of other business of equal but not greater importance—but which was also best calculated to secure for the present question, at the proper time, a minute, searching, and dispassionate examination, by acceding to the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman, and postponing till the second reading of the Bill, the discussion which must then take place on the main principle of the measure. He would, therefore, proceed to address a few remarks to the last and most important portion of the right hon. Gentleman's speech. From an announcement he had seen elsewhere of the views and intentions of the right hon. Gentleman, he had been led to expect a very different statement from that which they had just heard from him. To be sure, the right hon. Gentleman had, on this occasion at least, been exceedingly chary of his information to Members of that House. His hon. Friend the chairman of Lloyd's (Mr. Robinson) earnestly entreated the right hon. Gentleman to give him, and those with whom he acted, some insight into the alterations and modifications which he proposed introducing in his plan; but the right hon. Gentleman had peremptorily refused the information; and when he (Mr. Herries) had made a similar application, the right hon. Gentleman had remained inexorable, and "had made no sign." They could get no answer from him; and yet at the very same time that he was refusing to give the required information, or any inkling of it, there was conveyed through the ordinary channels of information, as they were called, a statement of all that they desired to know. Now he certainly did think it was a little too hard that Members of that House should ask for important information, and be refused; and that at the very moment they were urging their ineffectual solicitations, somebody in office should communicate the required information to the public by means of the press. He could not help thinking that some censure was fairly attachable to the Government from this transaction. He did not mean to bring any charge against the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, who he was sure would not refuse to impart to Members in that House information which they were most anxious to possess, while he knew that permission had been given to make that information public through other channels; but he certainly did think that it was very much to be regretted that there were some subordinates in office who took a different view of the case from the right hon. Gentleman, and pursued a different course. Judging, however, from the intimation which he had received in the manner he mentioned, he had been led to expect that the alterations to be proposed by the right hon. Gentleman in the resolutions of last year, would have been very different from what they had proved to be—that the alteration would have been for the better—that a step in the right direction, as it was called, would have been taken; and if this had been the case, he should have felt but little difficulty in closing with the right hon. Gentleman. Had the right hon. Gentleman informed them that day that he had already made arrangements, or had the prospect of making arrangements, not by a loose communication from Mr. Bancroft, but by a formal agreement with the American Government, for a commutation of commercial restrictions—for a fair and equitable exchange of advantages, whereby there should be given to this country an adequate exchange for making our coasting trade wholly or partially free to American ships—he should have been perfectly satisfied with the principle, at least, of that arrangement. But the whole case, as the right hon. Gentleman had arranged it, stood in this way—that there was no reciprocity at all in it. We stripped ourselves of the right to the exclusive trade of our own coasts and colonies; we were to surrender, by Act of Parliament, to all other nations the privilege which we now exclusively possessed, of carrying that colonial and coasting trade, only limited as proposed by the right hon. Gentleman, in exchange for what? For the vague expectation that we might hereafter receive from the American Government something of adequate value—something equal to what it was proposed to surrender. But even this vague expectation of some return for our concessions was limited to the hope of obtaining a participation in the coasting trade of America. He could have come to the consideration of the proposal with a disposition to entertain it if the House had been asked to concede to America the right of trading on the coasts of this country, in consideration of our receiving the right of trading throughout the American coast—from the eastern coasts to California, a distance of 10,000 miles—which at present English merchants were debarred from. This would have been a fair arrangement; but the measure now proposed was nothing of the kind. It was intended that we should concede everything without receiving any positive assurance even of the smallest concession on the other side. We proposed to abandon the long-established system of our navigation laws, our coasting trade, and our trade with the colonies, and to let all foreign nations—not America alone—compete therein on equal terms with our own shipping; France, Holland, Spain, and all other commercial States, were to be admitted to the free enjoyment of this carrying trade, hitherto exclusively our own, upon the mere expectation that they would exercise a similar liberality to us. But they had no means of giving to us equivalent advantages. What nation could give us any equivalent for our colonial trade? Could France, for example? He doubted if she would ever yield to us the intercourse with the few colonies she possessed. But, then, we were to reserve to ourselves the right, if other nations did not follow our example, and imitate our spirit of concession—to adopt retaliatory measures with respect to them—if Her Majesty should be advised to do so. This was at once a vicious and a dangerous provision in the present measure. Take an illustration of the dangerous character of this provision. He would assume that we gave to France, in common with other nations, the privilege of trading to our coasts and colonies. France refused, on the other hand, to concede similar privileges. We say, "We will retaliate, and we will take from you what we have conceded to all other nations." But what would France say in reply? Why, "according to your own confession, you took off these restrictions for your own benefit; it is, therefore, not right for you to say to us, that because we do not think as you do, you will make an exception in our case in your system of trade with foreign nations. Other nations may choose to make concessions to your free-trade doctrines, but we are taking steps to protect our navigation and our own commerce, and when you propose to establish a difference between us and other maritime States, in your commercial regulations, you are assuming a position unfriendly and offensive to us. He only mentioned this to show the inconvenience of the course proposed by the right hon. Gentleman. Such a proceeding as this would be neither a wise nor a prudent proceeding on the part of this country. France was a high-spirited and very sensitive nation; and, by the by, she had not made the smallest concession either to our principles of free trade or free navigation. On the contrary, she was even now taking steps of the most stringent character for the protection of her own navigation and her own internal industry: and that, too, in a manner which no political economist of the smallest liberality of principle would approve. This would indicate the spirit in which they might expect to be met upon this question by France. If the House and the right hon. Gentleman took the other course recommended by his right hon. Friend the Member for Oxford (Mr. Gladstone) of negotiating with other States on the principle of conceding in proportion as an equivalent was offered, there might be no objection to the relaxation of the laws. But the course of the right hon. Gentleman was so vicious, and so full of danger, so liable to create disputes, and lead to animosities between this country and other States, that when it came to be discussed in that House, he should feel bound to offer it his most decided opposition. The right hon. Gentleman introduced into the discussion, and laid great stress on the point, as favourable to his argument, the assertion that the measure would be of advantage to our colonies, and was desired by them. The right hon. Gentleman solemnly warned us not to exasperate the colonies by refusing to agree to his proposition. He asked us, "Will you venture to exasperate the colonies by continuing the navigation laws?" Was it really the right hon. Gentleman and his friends who exhorted us thus not to exasperate the colonies? Did the present Ministers of the Crown pretend to say this; they who, in fact, had themselves driven the colonies to exasperation, who had never shown any compassion for the colonies, and who, in the hour of the colonies' distress, had passed an Act which consummated their ruin? If the Government really feared the consequence of exasperating the colonies, let them undo what they had done. Let them give them that just measure of protection which was due to them, not only for their own interests, but for the greater interests of humanity. But when the House remembered the efforts which had been made by one who was now no more (Lord G. Bentinck) to induce the Government to relax their measures against the colonies, and to give them a relief, compared with which the present measure was a mere trifle—and when the House remembered the conduct of Government on those occasions—it was impossible not to treat with ridicule their appeals to the House not to exasperate the colonies. But Government showed no mercy to the colonies; they contemplated their losses with indifference, and the mischief they had inflicted upon them could in no degree be repaired by relaxing the navigation laws. The right hon. Gentleman had not introduced the case of the colonies with fairness. He had only told the House half the story. To persuade the House to abandon the principle of the navigation laws, he had not thought it beneath the subject to lay stress on an extract from the ledger of some mercantile firm—Messrs. Young and Knapp, he believed. [Mr. LABOUCHERE: It came from Lord Elgin.] The right hon. Gentleman ascribes it to Lord Elgin. But what did the evidence of Messrs. Young and Knapp weigh, even when inclosed in a letter from Lord Elgin, when placed in the scale against the navigation laws? The right hon. Gentleman had omitted all mention of that part of the question which went to prove that the remonstrances from Canada had for their foundation the complaint that Government had taken away all protection from Canada. They said, "We will be satisfied without the proposed change if you give us back our 5*s.* protection." The right hon. Gentleman should, in fairness, have stated the fact, that the remonstrances referred to were founded on the fact that the Canadians had been deprived of protective duties. So it followed that if you restored the protective duties the Canadians would not be very strong on the subject of the navigation laws. There was another point worthy of remark: the reply of Lord Grey to the communications of Lord Elgin, in the papers before the House, was confined to the last remonstrance transmitted from Canada; this had received his entire approval, while the other remonstrances in which protection was so strongly insisted upon, and distinctly connected with the removal of the navigation laws, were apparently unnoticed. It had been stated that the majority of the inhabitants of Canada were in favour of a repeal of these laws. But this was not the fact, as later information would prove that the repeal was not generally supported by the people of Canada. Had Government paid attention to the wishes of the colonies—had they done all they could not to exasperate them—then they would have paid attention to the first remonstrance which they received, and which embraced the subject of the protecting duties. After all, he (Mr. Herries) might be permitted to observe, as the right hon. Gentleman had admitted that the question involved the fundamental principles of the navigation laws, which rested entirely on the ground of protection to our mercantile shipping, for the sake of its utility to our naval power—the opposition to the right hon. Gentleman's proposition would be placed on that ground. It was absurd to pretend that this was a question of a purely mercantile character—a question to be determined by the balance of profit and loss in the ledger. They were asked to consent to the overthrow of the old established principles upon which the navigation laws were based, on the ground that the consumer would be able to purchase articles at a reduced price if they agreed to repeal these laws. The main part of the question had been blinked, namely, the use and intention of the navigation laws—why they were created, and why they were maintained. He (Mr. Herries) was not prepared to accept the version of their history given by the hon. Gentleman opposite, the Member for Stoke, Mr. Ricardo. No doubt he had given it in a very amusing manner, and there was a great deal of fun in it; but he could not assent to many of the propositions and statements of facts which it exhibited. They need not go back so far as the time of Richard II., for the history of them, nor even to that of Cromwell for authorities in support of them: let them refer to authorities within the period when the navigation laws became such as they are—let them consider the persons who, viewing all the considerations which the right hon. Gentleman now held in the balance—men who, having directed their minds to all the topics which were now assumed as the foundation of the case for the proposed reversal of these laws, still came to the deliberate conclusion that the balance of reasons greatly preponderated in favour of the maintenance of our navigation system. The supporters of this measure must first dispose of a vast mass of authorities in favour of that opinion, before they arrived at the conclusion that the advantages derived from the present state of these laws would be fairly counterbalanced by any such small benefits as might accrue from the propositions of the right hon. Gentleman. He would now venture to call the attention of the House to some other authorities on this subject, which did not yet appear to have received all the attention they deserved from this House. He did not now refer to the many great men and many philosophers whom he might have quoted as having maturely and fully weighed and studied this question, and come to the conclusion that those laws, maugre all the objections that could be urged against them, still constituted a system that ought to be maintained. He would pass from the great authorities of this country to the remarkable declarations of several very eminent men of the United States. No man would deny to Washington the credit for great wisdom. He weighed this very question in his sagacious mind with the utmost care, and came to the conclusion that the navigation laws ought to be maintained for the advantage of the nation over whose destinies he had exercised so important an influence. What did he say on this subject?—

> "I recommend it to your serious reflection how far, and in what mode, it may be expedient to guard against embarrassment from these contingencies, by such encouragements to our own navigation as will render our commerce and agriculture less dependent on foreign bottoms, which may fail us in the very moment most interesting to both of these great objects. Our fisheries, and the transportation of our own produce, offer us abundant means for guarding ourselves against this evil."

He would next cite the opinion of another great American authority, Mr. Madison, whose opinion on the question was entitled to very great respect. His opinion was—

> "If it is expedient for America to have vessels employed in commerce at all, it will be proper that she have enough to answer all the purposes intended; to form a school for seamen, to lay the foundation of a navy, and be able to support herself against the interference of foreigners. I do not think there is much weight in the observations that the duty we are about to lay on in favour of American vessels is a burden on the community, and particularly oppressive to some parts; but, if there were, it may be a burden of that kind which will ultimately save us from one that is greater."

He would now refer to the opinion of one nearer home, and of much more modern date, but scarcely less entitled to attention and respect; he meant the hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume). He held that hon. Gentleman to be a very great authority on this and other questions, and he would read a passage from the report of a Committee on the Light Dues, because it expressed such excellent sentiments, and was so much to the purpose in favour of protection. He believed the hon. Gentleman had been, about the year 1845, the Chairman of a Committee of this House with respect to light-houses; and his report contained sentiments so well expressed, and so much to the purpose, respecting the effect of the existing system of preference and protection to British shipping and seamen, that he (Mr. Herries) hoped he would be excused if he ventured to read a passge or two from it to the House:—

"Your Committee is most anxious to submit to the House the claims of the coasting trade to immediate relief, not only on economical but on political grounds of the highest importance to the maritime interests of this country."

He (Mr. Herries) was astonished to find this still regarded in any quarter as a contested point (however weak the contest might be upon the other side) whether the commercial marine of this country really was essential to the maintenance of our maritime supremacy. He (Mr. Herries) should have said a few years ago—if he had heard any Ministry, and more especially the present occupants of power, attempt to controvert what was almost axiomatic—that a mercantile marine was of the utmost importance as a nursery for replenishing, from time to time, our national Navy—that it was evidence of something little short of infatuation and insanity. However, he was surprised to find that this—one would almost have thought self-evident—truth appeared, now-a-days, to be disputed by many persons. The hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Hume), however, had no sympathy with such purblind individuals; for in the Light House Committee's Report he proceeded:—

"The great support of the naval power of the United Kingdom has been the facility of obtaining a supply of hardy seamen from the mercantile shipping, whenever required for the service of the Navy. Great Britain has had several branches of commerce—the nursery of that hardy race which have so ably maintained the honour and power of the country on that element where her force has been—and we trust is destined long to continue—paramount; but the earliest attention of Parliament is requisite to obviate the results that may take place, from the changes that are going on in the world by the introduction of steam; and, in our own country in particular, amongst the coasting shipping. Your Committee are the more anxious to direct the attention of Parliament to this important subject, because some other branches of our trade, which have hitherto supplied the hardiest of our sailors, have of late years considerably diminished, from various causes which it is unnecessary to detail. From our colonial trade in the East and West Indies we have had, and shall continue to have, a supply of seamen; but the Greenland and the South Sea fisheries, the Baltic trade, the Newfoundland, and, beyond all others, the coasting trade, have supplied the hardiest of our sailors; and a decrease of the supply from those sources must undoubtedly affect the future manning of the Navy, and consequently lessen the naval power of of the country. * * * From the evidence before the Committee, the coasting trade, which has, beyond all other trades, afforded to the Navy the largest supply of the hardiest of our seamen, is likely to decrease, unless Parliament shall adopt timely measures to protect it."

Here they had the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hume) before them in the character of a protectionist. [Mr. HUME: No, no!] Yes, he here avowed himself a protectionist. "Protection" was a word which they rather liked on that (the Opposition) side of the House; and he (Mr. Herries) was glad to hear it from the mouth of such an authority as the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hume) was admitted to be in that House upon such questions. He would not now detain the House by going into a detailed argument on the subject of this measure; he would defer discussing details to a subsequent stage; but he would very shortly state the grounds upon which, so far as he could form a judgment upon it, the House must ultimately form its decision with respect to the measure of the Government. The right hon. Gentleman, in the first part of his speech, had stated that the principle of the navigation laws was to be modified; but, according to this measure, the principle would not be modified but abolished. The main points on which he, for one, should oppose the passing of the Bill to be framed on the resolutions before the Committee were these: first, he would not admit other countries to an unrestricted carrying trade between this kingdom and our colonies, and between one colony and another. He contended that the exclusive possession of this purely domestic trade was indispensable to the commercial and maritime interests of this empire. No foreign nation could upon any pretext assert a right to a participation in it. It was no question of justice between nation and nation. As matter of bargain, there existed none that could give us an equivalent for it. Mr. Huskisson maintained the principle on the highest grounds—namely, that no nation had a right to interfere with our home trade, or our trade with our own colonies. We should only admit other nations as we found it advantageous to our own interest, if ever it could be made to appear to be so. If the right hon. Gentleman, when they should come to the discussion of the details of the measure, could show him what would be the difference of freight by admitting the foreigner to beat down the English shipowner to a level with theirs; if the advantage to the consumer by such a process could be shown to be such that it would be equivalent to a great national advantage; it might in that case, at least, be fitting to put it into the balance against the other national motives for sustaining the navigation laws. But when the amount of these supposed gains was fairly tested even by the evidence before the House, which had been got up to exaggerate it, the result would be found miserably insufficient to support the case. It was to be observed also, that whatever might be the aggregate saving to the capital employed in commerce by the expected diminution of freights, there existed no probability that any part of the benefit would find its way to the pockets of the consumer. The consumer was indeed made the stalking-horse in the advocacy of the change; but if any one would calculate the effect of the possible reduction of the freight upon any of the principal articles of consumption in the retail trade, he would find that the profit which the capitalist might have made in the gross, would have vanished entirely, or have been reduced to the most minute fraction, before they reached the hands of the consumer. It was thus that what appeared to be a considerable gain, when computed upon the gross amount of the tonnage employed in any one branch of imports, proved to be of little or no value to the consumer, for whose benefit it was pretended that the whole measure was designed. He then came to the second point, namely, that of the long voyage. He would not stop on this occasion to notice the objection urged on the score of some occasional and mostly trifling inconveniences arising out of our strict prohibition to receive from Europe any goods imported thither from the other quarters of the globe. The main object was, to secure to this country, in its intercourse with the distant quarters of the globe, the exclusive carrying of the bulky articles imported from thence. This was a matter entirely between us and the countries in Asia, Africa, and America, with which we traded. No European nation had a right to interfere with it. All other States might make the same regulations for themselves. But England had, in a peculiar degree, the power of securing to herself the advantages of them, and of constituting herself thereby the emporium of the world. For the sake of our navigation and that of the immense interests engaged in the maintenance of that position, it was necessary that the principle of the long-voyage clauses of the Navigation Acts should be upheld. On that point, therefore, he was not prepared to make any concessions, except such as might serve to obviate some anomalous obstruction, and perhaps to take off altogether from some minor articles of importation from the East, restrictions which create inconvenience to trade, without procuring corresponding advantages to our navigation. With respect to our commercial intercourse with other European nations, the existing treaties of reciprocity had settled most of the difficulties attending it. What remained in dispute should be provided for, not by a spontaneous abandonment of the navigation laws on our part, but by mutual concessions and amicable agreements. These were of a different character from our colonial intercourse and our eastern commerce, in which no other European Power ought to interfere. He was unwilling to say much more on this subject; but as America had so often been referred to in these discussions, he would remind the House of the advice given on one occasion by Mr. Huskisson when speaking of that nation; and he wished that hon. Gentlemen who so often declared they had so much respect for that departed statesman, would adhere more to the principles he had laid down. Mr. Huskisson showed how firmly he could resist a spirit that sometimes existed on their part, of asking more than they were entitled to. They could not forget the correspondence between Mr. Huskisson, Mr. Canning, and Mr. H. Gallatin. Mr. Huskisson, on the occasion alluded to, said, that—

> "When he was speaking of America in a British House of Commons, it was not improper to say that in matters of navigation there existed toward us a spirit of rivalry—a spirit which he did not blame, but which should make him doubt the wisdom of encouraging the growth of the mercantile marine of America."

Now, there was one feature in the proposition of Her Majesty's Ministers which presented a danger, which he could not help forwarning them would lead to extensive evil. He had ventured to point out to the House on a former occasion, that according to the proposed mode of legislation, the foreign navigation would have every advantage now belonging to a British ship, except in the coasting trade, which exception was now made still narrower. In every other part of the world the foreigner would have the same advantage. Look at the case of the British registered ship. On what ground was it likely that any man would embark his capital in British shipbuilding, if he found he could work out the same objects with a foreign-built ship as with a British-built vessel; and if he knew that, with a foreign ship, he would not have to sustain those disadvantages of navigation and crew, which were still to be attached to British-built ships? What was there, then, to prevent the enterprise of the British capitalist (that spirit of enterprise which pervaded every quarter of the globe)—from transferring his capital from that which was the least advantageous investment to that which was most advantageous, and to employ the foreign ship and crew as the cheaper instrument, in lieu of the British as the more costly one, for the purposes of his trade? He asked whether it could reasonably be expected that the mere spirit of patriotism would induce the capitalist to give the preference to British ships and British artisans under these circumstances? It was putting patriotism to too great a trial. But he was not indulging in a bare supposition when he took this view of the subject. There existed proof of the tendency of these alterations in our navigation laws to produce the effect he pointed out. In an answer from one of our consuls abroad to those insidious questions which were circulated from the authorities at home (for the purpose of detracting from the character of the British seaman, and lowering in the estimation of the world the reputation of a class of which we ought above all others to be proud), the fact is distinctly asserted that British capital is passing rapidly into the employment of foreign shipping, as an investment, in the Northern States with which we have treaties of reciprocity. Mr. Herstlet, the vice-consul at Memel, says that one of the motives for some of the complaints against the navigation laws by parties at home, is the great and increasing investment by British capitalists in foreign ships, as owners or part owners in the Baltic trade. This was the best answer to those who affected to deride the supposition that the British owner might be induced, not only by the greater cheapness of the foreign ship, but by the onerous condition attached to the British ship, from which the other was quite free, to transfer his capital to foreign ports, and pursue his trade with foreign seamen. But if hon. Gentlemen would attend to the evidence which had been given before the Select Committee of the House of Lords, they would find persons of no small experience declaring that if this Act passed, their capital would be transferred to other countries. Now, the right hon. Gentleman had quoted Mr. Money Wigram. But what did he say? Why, he said, "Take the protection away, and I will go to New York" ["No!" *from the Ministerial side.*] He (Mr. Herries) insisted that such was the effect of Mr. Wigram's evidence; but would not detain the House by searching for the passage. He had limited his observations on this occasion to the points which were involved in the principle of the measure, and was anxious to avoid details which must hereafter enter into the discussion. But he felt that he could not avoid saying thus much, even in this incipient stage of the proceedings, after what had fallen from the Mover of it. In its future progress, it should have his firm and persevering opposition. He had adverted to these points—he had confined himself to the principle involved; he had not entered into details which might arise in the discussion of this measure. He did not feel that he could suffer even this incipient stage of the measure to pass without taking the notice he had done of the principle of the Bill, especially after what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman. He should offer to the future stages of the measure every opposition in his power.

Mr. H. DRUMMOND said: As I have found there exists throughout the country great misapprehension as to the real nature of this measure, and as it is just possible that some hon. Members in the House may labour under the same misapprehension; I think it right to state that this question, divesting it of official jargon, in plain honest English is simply this—that it is the latest of a series of measures inculcated by the Manchester school, the end and object of which is to discharge all British labourers, and to employ for the future foreign labourers. Need I go through the details?—it is unnecessary. You have said, you will admit foreign timber instead of English timber—you have said, you will admit foreign timber sawyers instead of English timber sawyers—you have said, you will admit foreign shipwrights instead of English shipwrights—indeed, I may go through the whole catalogue of labour, and your policy will apply to all. But for what advantage are we to make all these changes? Why, for the advantage of certain mercantile men and Manchester cotton-spinners. It will not be my fault if the country does not understand the true meaning of this question, from one end to the other. It was considered to be a question merely of trade and commerce, and only connected with their mercantile marine, with which the inhabitants of the interior had little to do; but it, in fact, affected essentially and much more deeply the class of labourers than any other question that could be brought before the House.

MR. HUME said, he had heard many statements made in that House which had surprised him; but what had fallen from the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Drummond) certainly surprised him very much. That hon. Gentleman had taken upon himself to say, that this was the last of a series of measures which had been inculcated by the Manchester school; and he had ventured to say, that all of those measures tended to injure the labourers of this country. But how did the hon. Gentleman reconcile these assertions with the general complaint of those who were of that opinion, who told them that the cost of food was reduced by this measure? What could be of more importance to the working classes than that food of all kinds should be cheap? [MR. DRUMMOND: Wages.] Well, he would come to wages. Until a few days ago, wages had not been reduced that he had heard of. ["Oh, oh!"] In the country districts of the south, he had heard that morning that there had been a reduction certainly; and that those who had been receiving 9*s.* per week were now receiving 8*s.* This was on the part of the agricultural labourers, whose position was not caused by the measures referred to by the hon. Gentleman, but by measures which were independent of them. But what was it, he would ask, which gave wages and labour to the industrious classes? Why, it must be the increased means of employment. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Stamford (Mr. Herries) admitted that there was no place in the world so well calculated to be the depôt of the world as England; and what he (Mr. Hume) would ask, had prevented her from being so, so much as the restrictive laws on our commerce and navigation? Did they want proof that instead of capital being employed in labour here, it had gone elsewhere? Why, the right hon. Gentleman had told the House that the employment of capital was so restricted by the operation of the navigation laws, that they were obliged to employ the capital of Englishmen to carry on trade elsewhere! What caused that capital to go away? It was the restrictive operation of the navigation laws. That capital, his right hon. Friend said, was employed in building ships in Sweden, and Russia, and elsewhere; but were not Russians and others part owners? The right hon. Gentleman truly said, that from the restricted means of building ships in this country—and that was owing to the navigation laws—our merchant shipowners in this country were compelled to obtain a cheaper conveyance for their goods elsewhere. Now, so far from that being the case, as stated by the right hon. Gentleman, every one of his arguments went to disprove what he stated! What we wanted was, that the English merchant should be allowed to carry goods in an English ship as cheaply as in the bottoms of any other country. He (Mr. Hume) and his right hon. Friend (Mr. Herries) had been long engaged in arguing upon this subject; they had grown grey in discussing it; yet his right hon. Friend seemed to stand still, and to abide by all the obsolete doctrines which twenty times had been refuted in that House. The industry of this country had been shackled by monopolies; and the removal of every monopoly, whatever it might be, must tend to its advancement. England, which was blessed with such vast resources of capital and labour to employ, had nevertheless been most unfortunately forced to expatriate her capital in American, Prussian, and other ships, because these laws were in existence. His right hon. Friend had read an extract from a speech of Mr. Huskisson, but did he not know that but for the navigation laws the American navigation would not have been half what it was now? He hailed the proposition of Her Majesty's Government as one of the means of hereafter reducing the impediments to the employment of capital, the improvement of labour, and the keeping up of wages of those who were engaged in this country. The right hon. Gentleman said, that France had yielded nothing to us. But let him look to the state of the navy of that country. France had decreased that arm of power during the last five years, and that decrease was likely to be continued. The fact was, that wherever the blot of monopoly and restriction existed, an injury was done to the great interests of the nation if competition could not be brought to bear against them. From that cause France was suffering; and if she did not yield, she was likely to suffer still further in her commercial navy. Their conduct was not an example to follow, but a beacon to avoid. He hailed this measure as pointing to good results, and leaving our merchants and our shipping to competition. Again, why should not the colonies send to the best markets? Was the right hon. Gentleman afraid of English capital and industry competing with the foreigner? All the evidence which they had had upstairs proved that if they removed the fetters which prevented the proper application of capital and industry, they had nothing to fear. Let English ships compete, and he would ask whether there was anything to prevent our navigation being prosperous? So with the British shipwrights; they would not be injured. All the evidence he had heard was to the contrary. Give to the English fair scope only for their enterprise. If there were any restrictions upon the British shipowners, let them be removed. The right hon. Gentlemen (Mr. Labouchere) had alluded to one evil, which he had stated, and which was a burden. If they compelled the shipowner to take a certain number of apprentices, and did not allow him to man his ship as he thought best, that grievance ought to be removed. What was there to prevent British ships and English shipowners from competing with the rest of the world? He would not for a moment allow any inferiority on the part of his countrymen; but hon. Gentlemen seemed to think that Englishmen had not the power to compete with foreigners. America, it was said, did not respond to the principle laid down. But had not Mr. Bancroft (not, he supposed, by an act of his own) presented a letter to Lord Palmerston, telling him that every concession, and every removal of restrictions upon trade, the American Government were prepared to yield; that they were prepared to give perfect reciprocity? Had not the Americans promised reciprocity? [Mr. HERRIES: It has not yet taken place.] It had not taken place with us. Let us set the example, and we should obtain it. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Herries) had read to the House an extract from the report of the Select Committee on Light Dues, of which he (Mr. Hume) was the chairman. He wished that the right hon. Gentleman were bound by that report, every word of which he (Mr. Hume) would stand by. The right hon. Gentleman got hold of the word "protection," and said, "I have got the words from Mr. Hume that the British navigation ought to be protected." Now, what was the real object of this expression? Why, it had reference to light-houses; and the House, from this, might judge of the difficulty in which the right hon. Gentleman found himself to found an argument upon it. At the time when this Select Committee was sitting, there was a new competition with the coasting trade of America. That competition was the competition of railroads against the coasting trade; and the report of that Committee showed that the coasting shipping were paying five per cent on the amount of their freights, in light-dues, whilst the railroads took the goods without being liable to any portion of that expenditure; and this placed the coasting trade in a greatly inferior position. Had that anything to do with the navigation laws, he would ask? He contended that, whereas up to the present moment, the Government had not thought fit to adopt the recommendations of that Committee, still their adoption would be the soundest policy, especially as we had lost the southern and the northern whale fisheries, and other sources of enterprise. That Committee had recommended unanimously that every impediment should be removed, and thus that the coasting trade should be protected by being put on the same footing with the carriers of goods by steam; and this was the matter which the right hon. Gentleman attempted to turn to the question of the navigation laws. He was satisfied that the day was come when every man should look to the general objects of legislation. He wished to promote the commerce of the country by giving scope to the development of capital for the employment of our labourers and artisans; and he hoped that all men would see the absolute necessity of removing all trammels upon our trade and navigation. It had been proved to his mind beyond contradiction that the navigation laws had been productive of great evils. He, therefore, considered that Her Majesty's Government, by the course which they were pursuing (without reference to the colonies) were doing that which must tend to the permanent prosperity of this country and the improvement of her colonies. [*Cheers.*] He observed that cheer, and he was sorry to say he must join with those who held that the policy of the Government in respect to our colonies had destroyed millions of capital. That then, was misgovernment; but here was a proposition for the removal of burdens, and that could not be said to add to existing evils. It would be a relief if the whole of the world would compete with them. The colonists did not wish to be restricted by any navigation laws. He hoped that Her Majesty's Government would, day by day, proceed with this measure, and allow the House to put the question at rest. Whilst he was anxious to see relief given to the shipping and coasting trade in respect to the navigation laws, he hoped relief would also be granted them from the burden of light-dues. He was equally anxious to see a proper system adopted for our merchant seamen, that they might not be allowed to remain in the destitution in which many of them now were. He thought the time had come when they might safely dispose of the navigation laws; they could then legislate on light-house dues, which would have the effect of ameliorating the condition of the shipping interests.

Mr. BANKES: The hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume) has put a question to the hon. Gentleman behind me (Mr. Drummond), and has asked him whether the low price of food, caused by one of the measures included in this series, has not proved of advantage to the labouring classes? But I will put a question to the hon. Gentleman, and I ask him of what avail is the low price of food to the labourer who has got no money to buy it? This is, in point of fact, the way to look at the question; and, I think, if the hon. Member had listened to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, who introduced this measure, he would have been struck with that portion of the speech in which he said that the labourers of America were honest and diligent, whilst the labourers of this country were of a very opposite description—that, in fact, they formed illegal combinations, and were the reverse of the diligent and praiseworthy labourers who were to be found in America; and that, in order to encourage them, he was about to place them in competition with foreigners. This is, I think, anything but encouragement. I concur with my hon. Friend the Member for West Surrey (Mr. Drummond) in thinking that this measure is directed against the labourers of the country, who will be the principal sufferers by its baneful operation. I took the liberty the other night, when speaking of the omissions in Her Majesty's Speech with relation to the labouring classes, to express my apprehension that the Speech was incorrect, for it called upon us to express our satisfaction at the state of labour and employment in the manufacturing and commercial districts; and I ventured to call on any hon. Member in the House connected with manufactures—either the hon. Member for the West Riding (Mr. Cobden) or the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Bright)—to say whether those interests were in a satisfactory condition. One Member only (Mr. Henry) responded to the call, who stated that he was a manufacturer of large condition—a manufacturer in Glasgow, in Manchester, and Belfast. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] I am told by hon. Gentlemen that I am incorrect in thus describing the hon. Member; then, if that be so, and the hon. Gentleman who spoke be not a manufacturer, I am in a position to say that no manufacturer has risen in his seat to contend that the industrious classes are in such a state of comfort and prosperity as to justify us in expressing satisfaction. It is true, an hon. Gentleman did address us on this subject. I allude to the hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. Muntz), and I think the statements which he made to the House were not of a character to lead us to think we were incorrect when we hesitated to give our assent to that portion of the Speech from the Throne which spoke of the satisfaction we were called on to express with regard to the state of commerce and manufactures. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume) says he has only heard within the last few days, for the first time, that wages are depreciated in some of the agricultural districts in England. I have the honour to represent a county which has often been made the subject of allusion in this House in connexion with the low scale of wages paid to agricultural labourers. I have always heard those statements with regret, and I could not deny that to some extent, but not to so great an extent as was represented, those statements were true; but there was a time when I might have endeavoured in my own county—as I hope I ever shall—to counteract the evil; but the arguments which I could have then used are taken from me now, because the principle is to be adopted of free trade in everything—the principle of buying everything in the cheapest market, even labour among the rest. I agree with the hon. Gentleman behind me (Mr. Drummond) in thinking that this is one of a series of measures, the effect of which is to depress still more the condition of the labouring classes. With respect to the colonies, the right hon. Gentleman who introduced this measure (Mr. Labouchere) tells us that they will derive benefit from the proposition before the House; but will that proposition counterbalance the evil of your past legislation with reference to the colonies? Will they not rather wait until the turn in the tide of public opinion—a turn which is rapidly taking place—for that more effectual redress which this House will be obliged to make them when it is compelled, as it soon will be, to retrace its steps? Sir, I am satisfied that in voting against this proposition I shall not act contrary to the true interests of the colonies, for I am convinced that in their present position they would rather wait for that change of opinion which is even now taking place in the country, and which has already made its appearance in this great city. I appeal to hon. Gentlemen opposite to ask any tradesman in this town what is the condition in which he is now placed? I venture to ask, will any hon. Member connected with trade and the great commercial operations of this country get up and say that the traders of this country are of opinion that free-trade experiments have had a successful issue? And, Sir, if there is this change of opinion on the part of those engaged in commerce in this city, may I not venture to believe that the change will spread throughout the kingdom, where there is an opinion far and wide that the recent legislation of this House has not been guided by sound policy, and that we are approaching the time when we must retrace our steps. And I will also appeal to any Irish Member to rise in his place and say whether, in Ireland, there is the same opinion now in favour of free trade which induced them so rashly and so unhappily to give their fatal influence in carrying that measure. These are the sentiments which I hold in conformity with the hon. Member for West Surrey (Mr. Drummond) who has led me to believe that he has rightly characterised this measure when he said it was the latest of a series, the end and object of which was to crush and depress the labourer.

Colonel THOMPSON said, that when two sides of an assembly like that declared such very opposite opinions, and each with such decided confidence in their truth, it almost always happened that some principle had been overlooked, or at least not fairly explained and laid open in the arena of contest. He apprehended there was a misunderstanding on the opposite side of the House as to the principle which his side of the House maintained. In simple words, they maintained that protection, come from what side it would, always meant giving a shilling for sixpennyworth in return. On that fact they were ready to stake any credit with the country which they possessed; and if they had any such credit (and they had some), it was entirely because the large proportion of the country had been thoroughly indoctrinated with that principle. They did not believe that to give a shilling to receive sixpence in return was, or could be, or ever was, or ever would be, either sound policy or sound commercial wisdom. When Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House spoke of the industry of the country, as demanding protection and encouragement— what they really meant was, to prop up one industry by taking away two or three others. A former eminent Member of that House once advised his son to take a wife, and the young man replied, "Willingly, Sir; whose wife shall I take?" In the same manner, when hon. Gentlemen opposite talked of protecting industry, he always asked them who was to suffer? The whole question resolved itself into this: some man's industry was to be put a stop to, in order to increase the produce of some other man's industry, with the *tertium quid* of something being taken from the consumer besides. Was it not plain that every omnibus which received its sixpenny fare had put down one of the venerable hackney-coachmen, who proposed to do the same work for 1*s.* 6*d.* Why was that acquiesced in by Gentlemen on the other side? Was it not because they had a consciousness that that shilling saved was not thrown into the river, but was expended in some industry or other? It might go to the butcher, the grocer, or the pastrycook; but to some industry or other it was sure to go; and this was the same to industry in the aggregate as if it went to the industry of the hackneycoachman. But there was something more: the man who went to the butcher, the grocer, or the pastrycook, got something for his shilling; in the other case he did not. It was that which made the difference, and turned the balance in favour of free trade, which permitted omnibusses to run about our streets, and put down all chance of a successful resistance from the hackney-coachmen. Were Gentlemen opposite to ask the hackney-coachmen themselves if there was any propriety in putting down omnibuses, in order to promote their trade, he believed they would demur; at all events, if asked whether they thought there was any chance of a successful resistance on that point, the honest fellows would rub their brows and say, "We wish that we may get it." He would invite hon. Gentlemen opposite to try the experiment in reference to the working classes of this country. Let them say to those classes, "You have a trade which cannot live by itself; but here are two or three other trades which, if put down, might prop up yours to your satisfaction." He doubted whether they would get twenty men to support such a proceeding; he doubted whether men would not be revolted by the glaring injustice of the whole proposal, or, if not, by the utter improbability of anything like final success. It was said that we ought not to encourage foreign labour. Neither would he if it diminished English labour. He hoped, however, that hon. Gentlemen who had heard this debate, would take away with them the conviction that all protection for the encouragement of English labour was a delusion and a mistake. Hon. Gentlemen contrived to forget the fact, that wherever they apparently increased English labour in one direction, they infallibly (and the free-traders were there ready to prove it), diminished and destroyed English labour in some other direction. If the protectionists could prove the contrary, every man on his (Colonel Thompson's) side the House—on the much-maligned free-trade bench, at all events—would be ready to vote with them. Sentiments of this kind had not been advanced in opposition to hon. Gentlemen on the other side every time that protection and diminution of labour had been mentioned; but had he had charge of those principles, he would have had a man stationed on that bench, to have kept sentry, whose duty should have been, every time these delusive pretexts were put forth, to have demolished them, as he might readily have done, by a simple exposition of the first principles of free trade. He would apply himself only to one argument more—the necessity of keeping up the navigation laws for the sake of the defences of the country. The principle of this was, that it was worth while to give a shilling for sixpennyworth in return, in order that we might have a mercantile marine whence to take sailors for the Navy. If any Gentleman would close with them upon that, and reduce the argument for the navigation laws to saying it was politic, wise, and necessary to do this, in order to have sailors for the Navy, he believed the ground of debate would be considerably diminished. But though there was undeniably a connexion between an extensive mercantile marine and a naval force, that was not everything; there were other sources on which a military marine must depend. It must depend, among other things, on the general wealth of the country. If they made a poor country—if they took the course of paying everywhere a shilling to get sixpence in return, he knew no more ready way of rendering the country unable to meet the expenditure necessary for military and naval exertions. Sailors were a great deal, but not everything; they might buy even a sailor too dear; and it was not true that there was any existing connexion between the necessity of buying sailors at this excessive price, and the having a navy manned to the extent which was demanded. But naval officers were better able than he to speak on this subject; and he would conclude, by pressing on the House to consider whether there was any such real and absolute necessity, before they consented to the process recommended to them, of paying, even for British sailors, at the rate of a shilling, when sixpence was to be the value received in return. He assured hon. Gentlemen opposite that free-trade principles did not rest on the strength of its advocates alone; it was because they had the advantage in the country, because the majority of the country was with them in their opinions; and they were perfectly ready to bring to any decision that might be proposed the trial of their strength. Hon. Gentlemen opposite charged them with attending meetings in connexion with this question. Had not those Gentlemen themselves liberty to go to any meetings they pleased? But they could not bring forward public opinion to back them as the free-traders could; and hence the free-traders were strong, and their opponents weak.

Mr. R. C. HILDYARD said, he did not rise to refute the sordid reasoning founded upon the proposition that it was not prudent to pay a shilling for what could be purchased for a sixpence. Great as was the difference that existed between that and the other side of the House upon these subjects, he did not apprehend that, to the abstract proposition alluded to, any objection would be made, whatever might be said as to its application. He rose rather to correct a misrepresentation made by the hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume), and thereby deprive him of an argument upon which he relied with confidence. His right hon. Friend the Member for Stamford (Mr. Herries) had read an extract from a letter of the vice-consul at Memel, stating that British capital was, in certain places, known to be largely embarked in foreign shipping. Upon this the hon. Member (Mr. Hume) had commented with great but premature and mistaken triumph, and had said, "See the consequence of these absurd navigation laws." But the extract read by his right hon. Friend did not state generally that British capital was invested abroad in foreign shipping. It stated that this was the case only in those countries in which reciprocity treaties existed—and in which, therefore, the navigation laws did not in reality operate. That is to say, the letter of the vice-consul at Memel showed that in those countries in which the navigation laws had been relaxed, the consequences which the supporters of those laws contended must result from their relaxation or repeal, had really resulted. Yet the hon. Member for Montrose, without exhibiting that lucidity for which his speeches were characterised, had managed to mistake this for an argument in favour of the repeal of those laws, although it was restricted to those countries in which the navigation laws had been relaxed. He would just remind the House of the evidence of Mr. Porter before the House of Lords, in confirmation of the inference he had deduced from the statement in question. The Committee of that House had drawn the attention of Mr. Porter to the fact that British shipping had declined rapidly in the Northern States of Europe, and asked an explanation of it. He replied, that "British shipping found more profitable occupation elewhere"—and that, in fact, was the whole question. British shipping could not compete with the shipping of those northern ports, but was driven thence to the colonial and the indirect trade of this country. This was a question of vast importance, for the profits of all shipowners could not be greater than the general profits of capital in this country. If, therefore, the profits of capital in this country were not such as to allow shipowners to engage in competition with those countries in which they were allowed reciprocity by treaties, it followed that if the whole of our shipping interest were placed upon the same footing, capital would gradually be withdrawn from shipping altogether, and this great country would become in a large measure dependent for its shipping upon foreign countries. He did not intend, however (after the understanding that had been entered into) to go into the general question on this occasion.

Mr. J. L. RICARDO said, it had been generally understood at the commencement of the debate, that the resolutions of the right hon. Gentleman would not be opposed by hon. Gentlemen opposite—that the details of the measure were not to be discussed—and that the conversation would end by the passing of the resolutions, the discussion being reserved for the second reading of the Bill. Under these circumstances, he should certainly refrain from entering into any details; but he must say, after all he had heard from hon. Gentlemen opposite, he was puzzled to conceive the principle upon which they founded their opposition to the present measure. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Stamford (Mr. Herries) had declared that if he could obtain reciprocal concessions from foreign countries, he should have no objection whatever to concession on our part. He (Mr. Herries) had declared that if the coasting trade of this country should be relaxed, he, at least, would not oppose it so long as it was relaxed by the United States. The hon. Member for Westmoreland (Mr. Alderman Thompson), when the subject was last under discussion, declared himself in favour of some relaxation of what is called the long voyage. The hon. Member for Sunderland said he was willing that the crews of British ships should be composed of sailors of all nations of the world. Now, with all these relaxations, what became of the fundamental principle of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Herries). If the fundamental principle meant anything at all, it surely meant this—that the trade of this country ought to be confined to British ships and British sailors; and if a concession was made, by which foreign ships and foreign sailors would be permitted to trade with this country under the British flag, the whole fundamental principle was abandoned. The right hon. Gentleman said that one of the main arguments to be considered was, the operation of such a measure with regard to the Royal Navy. He (Mr. Ricardo) agreed with his hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Thompson), that the question ought to be narrowed down to proper limits. It was admitted by hon. Gentlemen opposite, that the relaxation of the navigation laws would be a boon to commerce. Then the whole question came to this—would that relaxation so far destroy the Royal Navy as to render it less able to defend the country? He must say that this came rather suspiciously from the shipowners, who were chiefly interested, as they imagined, in the maintenance of these laws. He, however, was quite willing that the right hon. Gentleman should take that ground; but if he did take that ground let the question be narrowed to that ground, and let the House consider whether the maintenance of the Royal Navy absolutely depended on the navigation laws. He should be fully prepared to discuss that question on another occasion, and would not now enter into any detail, but would simply make this remark, that if that be the case, one of two things must follow—either the navigation laws are too much or they are too little restricted. It was proved in evidence before both Committees that the mercantile marine of this country no longer retained that superiority for which it was once so celebrated. It was also in evidence—and there were British merchants around him who would state the same thing—that the merchants of this country were continually receiving advices from their correspondents not to ship articles in British bottoms if they could obtain foreign bottoms. Well, then, hon. Gentlemen must either protect our export trade as well as our import trade, or else the navigation laws were doing a positive injury, because they were making the shipowners lean upon this law and trust to this law, which burdened them with apprentices, light-dues, and other imposts. These things would never have existed with free trade. Could any one suppose the shipowners would have submitted to these regulations if they had not been answered, "See how we are protecting you—we are giving you the monopoly of the carrying trade—you must therefore not complain of being obliged to take apprentices or pay light-dues." Of course, sooner than lose what they considered protection, they were willing to submit to these things. The consequence was, that we were now inferior to those nations for which we were once the model; and if the present system should be allowed to continue for five or six years longer, the same Gentlemen would come and say, "You must not take away our protection, because, see how the tonnage of England has fallen off in comparison with that of other countries; we cannot compete with them, and must be protected." In fact, every year they would require more and more protection, and as the system of protection went on, they would go on increasing in inferiority, and every inferiority would be an excuse for restrictive laws. It would be far better if in this country, instead of accepting an inferiority, and endeavouring to bring down other countries to the level of our inferiority, we should make an effort to raise ourselves up to the level of our superiors. It would be far better to say to the shipowners, "Depend upon yourselves—depend upon your energies as Englishmen—depend upon the resources of this country, and the wealth which commands the resources of the world, and do not trust to Acts of Parliament." It would be better to send forth our ships free as the winds which filled their sails, with liberty to go where they would, and come from where it suited them, than to start them from our ports encumbered with the 8th and 9th Victoria, chapter the 88th, and ballasted with twelve volumes of Hertslett's commercial treaties.

Mr. Alderman THOMPSON said, as it was generally understood that the resolutions would not be opposed, he should address very few observations to the Committee. The hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Ricardo), had asked what was required by those who were opposed to the measure. He (Mr. Alderman Thompson) could make a very short answer to the hon. Gentleman. They wanted a valuable consideration for those commercial advantages which were about to be surrendered — they wanted reciprocity. The hon. Gentleman had reminded him that on a former occasion he (Mr. Alderman Thompson) had made the admission that certain concessions ought to be made to the commercial interests on certain articles connected with the long voyage, What he said on that occasion he was quite willing now to repeat—namely, that there were some articles—the produce, for instance, of South America—which might by a custom-house regulation be admitted into consumption in this country, and which would give facilities to our commerce, and not interfere with the principle of our navigation laws. That opinion he still maintained; but he contended there was no inconsistency in holding that opinion, and at the same time having a decided opinion in favour of maintaining the main principle of our navigation laws. The hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume) stated what he (Mr. Ald. Thompson) had not heard before, namely, that the American Minister had signified that whatever concession might be made in respect to our navigation laws, the country which he represented was ready fully to reciprocate that concession. But he (Mr. Ald. Thompson) might be allowed to ask what concession could the United States make to us in comparison with the great advantages we were about to surrender to them? And by the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Labouchere), it should be remembered that greater advantages were now proposed to be given than were suggested when the right hon. Gentleman introduced his measure in the course of the last Session. But it should also be recollected that the talented individual who now represented the United States, was placed in very different circumstances from those which existed in March last. He believed it was usual, on the election of a new President, to recall the Minister appointed by his predecessor. It was well known that Mr. Bancroft represented a President and a Government entertaining a far more liberal opinion on the subject of free trade than President Taylor. He had a right to assume this, because it was notorious to all that it was on the principle of protection to native industry that General Taylor was elected President of that country, and the apprehension existed that increased duties would be proposed by President Taylor. But more—it must be known to others as well as himself, who had large transactions with that country, that there was a general apprehension with regard to the contracts now making, that only the goods already imported should be subject to the tariff now in existence. Let the House look at the position of the United States. It was quite clear they possessed great advantages over us with respect to the colonial trade, and with respect to the transport of sugar from the Havannah, the Brazils, and Porto Rico. There was also much valuable trade carried on between the United States and China. If the proposed measure were adopted, the American ships would bring tea to this country which they had received in exchange for the manufactures of the United States, and would ultimately drive out of the Chinese market British manufactures. His right hon. Friend the Member for Stamford (Mr. Herries) had clearly proved that although freights must, from the nature of things, fall, and to some extent benefit the importer, yet that the great object which the promoters of the measure had in view, namely, to cheapen the article to the consumer, would not be attained. What was the system upon which Spain acted with reference to the conduct of her colonial trade? He would call the attention of the House to a statement made by Mr. Lindsay, who had recently addressed a series of letters to the noble Lord at the head of the Government. That gentleman said—

> "Some time since I paid a visit to the city of Glasgow, and my attention was directed to two vessels advertised as loading for Manilla. They lay contiguous to each other—one was a Spanish, the other was a British ship. The latter was, in every respect, the finer vessel, and, on inquiry, I found that the owners offered to take goods by her at from 15*s* to 25*s*. per ton freight. She had, however, very few on board; whilst the Spanish ship was loading bales, boxes, and every description of merchandise as fast as it could be stowed away in her hold, and, to my great surprise, every package shipped in her paid freight at rates ranging from 80*s*. to 100*s*. per ton. I had less knowledge then, and I said to myself, 'There must be some mistake here. A splendid British ship, in a British port, cannot get a quarter of a cargo of British manufactured goods, though she offers to take them to the same port at one-fifth of the rate of freight at which the old Spanish ship was paid for a full cargo of similar goods.' I determined to satisfy myself on this point, and found, my Lord, I was not under mistake. They were both destined for a Spanish colony, and on reference to the tariff at the port of Manilla, I found that British and other foreign cotton and silk manufactures paid an *ad valorem* duty of 12½ per cent if imported in Spanish, and 25 per cent if in British and other ships—that cotton-twist, cutlery, ready-made clothes, &c., paid 40 per cent if in Spanish vessels, and 50 per cent if in others."

He (Mr. Ald. Thompson) should like to know whether any communication had taken place with the Spanish Government, showing the probability of any system of relaxation. But the system was not confined to Spain only, for English ships importing goods into Java paid a duty of 30 per cent, whilst goods imported in Dutch bottoms paid only 10 per cent. Now, with regard to France. Coals were exported to that country free of duty. Of that he did not complain. The return which we received for our liberality was this—two years ago the French Government introduced into their contracts a condition that coal exported from England to France should be conveyed in French ships. The new republican Government of France, in their contracts advertised the other day, had extended that principle to the supply for the public service. The contracts made for the supply of the marine service and the post-office amounted to from 60,000 to 70,000 tons. But the most extraordinary part of the proceeding was this—that the restrictions imposed on the import of coals for the use of the French post-office packets applied to one of our own British possessions—namely, Malta, and, consequently, English coals for the use of the French post-office service were not allowed even to be admitted into a British possession, except in a French bottom. And he would ask what probability was there of France approximating to a more liberal system? Now, with regard to Canada, of which the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Labouchere) had said so much, he must say that the statement of the right hon. Gentleman had been completely answered by his right hon. Friend the Member for Stamford (Mr. Herries). The Canadians said, "We shall be ruined, unless you give us a protecting duty upon our flour and our corn." It was well known that the repeal of the corn laws, and the great alteration in the timber duties, had committed serious injury upon that great and important colony. But there was one most extraordinary circumstance connected with this memorial. They stated that they can ship their goods cheaper at the port of New York than at the port of Montreal, and they went into a calculation to show what the expenses are by internal navigation to New York and Montreal; but they gave no information whatever to show what the difference in freight would be from the St. Lawrence to any other port by an English or foreign vessel. That was a most extraordinary omission, and one which he had no doubt did not result from accident. The great evil under which the Canadians were labouring was this—that they could not export so cheap from Montreal as from New York; and he could not conceive how the repeal of the navigation laws would materially alter their condition. He held in his hand an account of a meeting recently held at Demerara, where great distress existed. They stated that they would not commit so great a wrong to the mother country as to propose the repeal of the navigation laws. They stated that the repeal might be a slight benefit to them, but that it would be attended with so much danger to the mother country that they could not support it. With regard to New Brunswick, there existed no disposition to repeal the navigation laws. This was not a shipowner's question, nor was it a shipbuilder's question. In his opinion, it was a great national question. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Labouchere), had referred to the evidence given by a friend of his (Mr. Ald. Thompson) before a Committee of the House of Lords—the evidence of Mr. Money Wigram. Mr. Wigram, only yesterday, put into his hand a paper, showing that so far from oak timber being as cheap in London as it is in New York—the price in New York is 1*s.* 4*d.* per foot, whilst he is paying for timber similarly framed 5*s.* 6*d.* or 6*s.* per foot. Mr. Wigram stated that he had received the letter from a person in New York whose opinion was entitled to the greatest weight. [Mr. LABOUCHERE: What is the date of the letter?] He understood that the letter had been received by the last mail. The writer stated—

> "If the information can be relied on, and I believe it to be correct, it fully explains the large comparative difference in the cost of ships of the two countries, and will, I think, occasion insurmountable difficulty against British shipowners. In addition to the difference of labour I mentioned yesterday, I am informed moulds are sent into the country, and the timbers converted, and cut to their exact size in the woods where the timber grows. Much expense is thus saved in carriage, and best white oak is delivered in New York, converted to its exact size for use at 32 cents, or 1*s.* 4*d.* per foot cubic measure—against a cost for English oak, cut to its exact size, and delivered in London of 5*s.* 6*d.* to 6*s.* per foot cubic measure in the same state. Pine timber costs in New York, 35 cents, or 1*s.* 5*d* against 2*s.* 1¼*d.* in London. Other wood materials in proportion."

Upon the nationality of the question he would trouble the Committee with only one or two observations, and a few extracts from the evidence given before the House of Lords. Sir Byam Martin, one of the oldest officers in the the service, and a man of great experience as a naval officer, and at the Naval Board said—

> "I confidently assert that the mercantile ma-

rine is every thing to the Navy, and that the Navy cannot exist without it."

Captain Nicolas said—

> "I have always looked to the mercantile navy for the purpose of supplying our ships when short of hands. I have always found it succeed; the seamen bred in the merchant service are the best in the world, and the most trustworthy in all dangers and difficulties. I think we must look to it as our mainstay."

Admiral Sir Thomas Cochrane also gave evidence in support of the navigation laws. Captain Berkeley, a Lord of the Admiralty, admitted that two-fifths of the seamen in the Queen's service, have been taken from the merchant service. He (Mr. Ald. Thompson) regarded the question as of the greatest importance in a national point of view. He believed that the prosperity of the Navy depended upon it; and he, therefore, trusted that the House, looking at the measure as a whole, would not be induced to assent to it without the adoption of an efficient system of reciprocity.

Mr. MITCHELL said, that his hon. Friend the worthy Alderman had in the course of his speech endorsed one or two fallacies of so gross a nature that he felt called upon very shortly to notice them. In the first place, it had been intimated that the reduction in the freight of goods would not go into the pockets of the consumer. He believed that there would be a reduction of 25 per cent in the freights of goods coming from all quarters of the world, and this would be a large profit in itself, which would go to the consumers, and this in itself would insure a great addition to the quantity of goods imported. But there was a further advantage which did not appear to have struck hon. Gentlemen opposite, namely, that this reduction in the freight would increase the quantity of any article imported, and thus would act advantageously in an indirect way in the reduction of prices. Within the last three months it had come to his (Mr. Mitchell's) knowledge that a most extraordinary result had attended the increased importation of an article of general consumption. It appeared that the quantity of it imported reached one-thirtieth part beyond the amount that was anticipated, and the result of this had been to produce a glut, and to lead to the reduction of prices 20 per cent. He therefore contended that the reduction of freights would operate in the same way, and must be productive of great benefit to the consumers. The next argument of the worthy Alderman was the case which he quoted, of three different countries which had more restrictive navigation laws than our own, namely, Spain, France, and Holland. The question was whether these increased restrictions had been of service to any of these countries. With respect to Holland, it was a remarkable fact that a considerable portion of the coasting trade there was not carried on in Dutch ships. As regarded France, it was a matter of perfect notoriety that so far from these restrictions having been productive of good, they had led to the directly opposite result, for the mercantile navy of France was not nearly in the thriving condition it formerly was in. It was also well known that for a long time past the mercantile navy of Holland had not increased. There was no doubt that increased duties were imposed on British manufactures when imported in English ships into the Spanish colonies, instead of in Spanish vessels. This, however, had no great effect: at present a great deal of sugar was imported into this country from Cuba, but nearly the whole of it came to this country in English bottoms. In these as well as other countries, the more restrictive the navigation and other commercial laws were, the more injurious had they proved to those nations which had adopted them. From what had fallen from the right hon. Member for Stamford (Mr. Herries) and the hon. Member for Westmoreland (Mr. Alderman Thompson), it was clear that they had abandoned the whole case as being damaging to the shipowners or the shipbuilders [Mr. Alderman Thompson: No, no!] Why, the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Herries) and other hon. Members said that all that they claimed was reciprocity, and that if there was reciprocity the English shipowner could compete with the whole world. Was not this giving up the whole case of last year as to protection, and as to the additional expense of building British ships and providing stores? He was perfectly willing to go into the expense of every article for shipbuilding, and for all other commodities connected with shipping, and would undertake at the proper time to show that there was nothing connected with English ships to prevent them being able successfully to compete with foreigners. He had understood from the worthy Alderman that a correspondent of Mr. Money Wigram had stated, that white oak sold at New York at 1*s.* 4*d.* the square foot, and that the same timber could not be obtained here under from

5*s*. 6*d*. to 6*s*. the foot. Now it so happened that the worthy Alderman had compared the raw and unprepared white American oak with the manufactured and prepared English oak. The white oak of America, also, was essentially different from the oak of this country, for the former would only keep seven years, while the English oak in ships would be perfectly sound at the end of twelve years. To put them on the same footing, was something like comparing a donkey to a race-horse. He would not occupy the attention of the House longer in dealing with such gross fallacies.

Mr. ROBINSON said, he should not have risen on the present occasion if the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Labouchere) had thought it right to lay the resolutions upon the table, accompanied by a short statement of the facts and reasons which induced him to propose those resolutions. But he had gone into a lengthened statement in favour of the policy of the Government, and had referred to certain portions of the evidence given before the Committees of the two Houses of Parliament, to suit his own purpose, carefully and studiously overlooking all those other portions of the evidence, given by the same parties, which militated against his scheme. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Bridport (Mr. Mitchell) had risen to expose what he called the gross fallacies of his hon. Friend the Member for Westmoreland (Mr. Alderman Thompson). Now he (Mr. Robinson) would endeavour to show that the hon. Member for Bridport and other Members on that side of the House, had fallen into some fallacies. The hon. Member spoke of the question as if the consumer was the only party in this country whose interest was to be consulted. Now, he would ask what proportion of Her Majesty's subjects were consumers who were not also producers; and of what use would it be to the consumer to get an article cheaper if he lost the power of production? That was the whole question, and he fully agreed in the short and pithy speech of the hon. Member for Surrey (Mr. Drummond), that all these free-trade questions which had been brought before the House in succession tended to the discouragement of labour and the depreciation of wages, and would ultimately pauperise the country. Another fallacy had been put forward by the hon. and gallant Member for Bradford (Colonel Thompson), who contended that the system of protection advocated on that (the Opposition) side of the House, was neither more nor less than the picking of one man's pocket for the benefit of another. But the advocate of protection was the advocate of protection to British subjects in contradistinction to foreigners. Those who advocated protection proceeded on the principle that, whereas neither the labourer, nor the capitalist, nor the agriculturist, nor the colonist, can be put on the same footing as the foreigner, the letting of foreigners into our markets both at home and in our colonial possessions renders it impossible we can compete with them. He trusted the subject would receive that consideration which its magnitude and importance deserved. If, in the course of the discussion, he should find a majority of the House determined to pass the measure in its integrity, he should deeply regret their decision, believing it would be one of the most impolitic and dangerous measures ever passed by a British House of Commons; but, at the same time, he would offer it no factious opposition. He would content himself with the expression of his opinion at the different stages of the measure. If, however, the measure should be forced through the House of Commons, it must pass another ordeal before becoming the law of the land, and he trusted he should have occasion to say, in the words of Mr. Cobbett, "Thank God, there is a House of Lords." The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Labouchere) quoted the evidence of Mr. M. Wigram and Mr. G. F. Young. No gentlemen of higher authority could be quoted on this subject. The right hon. Gentleman said, their evidence showed that the difference in the cost of timber was comparatively trifling. But the right hon. Gentleman did not tell the House that Mr. Wigram said, that, looking to the whole question, the effect would be to ruin the British shipbuilders; and that he would be obliged to shut up his establishment and go elsewhere. He was not well acquainted with shipbuilding; but he believed the cost of timber did form a material ingredient. In London the difference was not much, because the vessels there were built of British oak, on which there was no duty. But the people of Sunderland told them that the difference in the building of a vessel of 200 tons was more than 300*l*. in the cost of timber alone. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Labouchere) had congratulated the House that time had been afforded for the consideration of this question, because the Canadians had now shown a much stronger disposition for the repeal of the navigation laws than they did last year. But the right hon. Gentleman had not told the House that the Canadians, although they last year expressed an opinion that the repeal of those laws might enable them to compete with the Americans, now required a protecting duty of 5*s*. a quarter on the wheat of Canada. He knew that even a hint expressive of any kind of protection excited the horror of hon. Gentlemen opposite. Unless he was greatly mistaken, the cry for protection would be heard sooner than they expected. The right hon. Gentleman had also stated that he saw no reason why the Canadians should not carry on the trade with the West Indies as well as the Americans. Did not the right hon. Gentleman know that the geographical position of Montreal and Quebec would ever place them at a disadvantage with the Americans as regarded the West India trade—a disadvantage which no alteration of the navigation laws would ever compensate them for? The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that trade might be carried on with the West Indies as easily from the St. Lawrence as from the ports of Maine. Now, every one knew that the voyage was as long from Montreal to Maine as from Maine to the West Indies. The repeal of the navigation laws would not, therefore, enable Canada to compete with the United States in the West Indian trade. The only effect of it would be to injure the shipping interests of this country, without bestowing any benefit on the colony. He had referred to the debates which had taken place in Canada on this question, but could find no expression of opinion in favour of so sweeping a measure as that now proposed. When he looked round and saw the hon. Members by whom this measure was supported—when he found it supported by the noble Lord the Member for the city of London, the last person in the world knowingly to consent to a measure opposed to the public welfare—he did not feel justified in asserting that the measure would be entirely ruinous in its results; but, looking to the effect which former free-trade measures had produced, he felt he could not do better, with reference to this question, than to raise his voice in opposition to it. It had been said that hon. Gentlemen on his side of the House, in admitting the question of reciprocity, had abandoned their whole case. He could not admit this. There was a great and important difference between entering into reciprocity treaties and throwing open the trade and navigation without stipulating for any return. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Labouchere) proposed to reserve to the Queen in Council the power of withholding the advantages of free trade from those States which did not exercise reciprocity. When he (Mr. Robinson) recollected the principles which had been enunciated by hon. Gentlemen opposite with respect to this point, he could not consent to grant such a power. The right hon. Gentleman had rested his whole case on the assumption that the navigation laws imposed restrictions on commerce, and that, in order to free commerce, it was necessary to repeal those laws. He did not deny that the navigation laws placed in some instances restrictions on trade. He was perfectly ready, in compliance with the recommendations in the Speech from the Throne, to consider how far such restrictions might be removed by any alteration of the navigation laws consistent with the security of the country. But the recommendation from the Throne was not the proposition made by the Government. It was said that the repeal of these laws was called for in order to extend commerce. What commerce was meant? Not that of this country, but foreign commerce. The whole of the evidence taken before the Committee of the House of Lords was unfavourable to the proposition which was now submitted to the House. He found, from a statistical account, that at this moment the tonnage of the United States was 3,100,000 tons, while that of this country, including its colonies, was 3,800,000 tons. The difference was, therefore, only 700,000 tons: and if they were allowed to trade direct between our colonies and the mother country, and to have the intercolonial trade thrown open, without any restrictions, he (Mr. Robinson) warned the House that the marine superiority of Great Britain would gradually diminish, whilst the United States would enjoy the benefits of a trade to which they never had any claim whatever, and for which they could give us no compensation.

Mr. J. WILLIAMS said, he would not trespass upon the time of the House more than a few moments. Although he could not agree with the hon. Member for Dorsetshire (Mr. Bankes) as to the causes of the present depression in trade, he concurred with him that, both in the metropolis and in the country generally, trade had not, for many years, been so depressed as it was at this moment. If he (Mr. Williams) had been in his place on the assembling of Parliament, he certainly should have taken the opportunity of expressing his opinion on that part of the Speech from the Throne, as well as on those portions of the speeches of the Mover and Seconder of the Address which congratulated the House on the revival of trade. At the same time he admitted there was some temporary revival in the manufacturing districts; but that was always the case in the first three months of the year. He wished the noble Lord the Member for the city of London would ask the opinion of the great merchants and others connected with the retailers in all parts of the country as to the state of trade. They would inform the noble Lord, as they had himself (Mr. Williams), that although they never held such large stocks as they did now, they never had so much trouble in effecting sales; and that they did not find the money coming in so readily as they used to do. Now who were the traders that came into immediate contact with the millions? Why, the retail dealers; and he should be ashamed of his alliance with them if he did not stand up in his place and tell the Government and the House that the state of trade with them was never less prosperous than at this moment. Nevertheless, he trusted that the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Labouchere) would pass into law, because he was convinced it would be the means of giving increased employment to the people, and consequently of improving the condition of the labourer.

Sir J. TYRELL was not surprised at the right hon. the President of the Board of Trade endeavouring to prevent the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Williams) from addressing the House. He was glad the hon. Gentleman opposite had spoken, because whenever any one on his side spoke of the depreciation of trade, there was some one of the Manchester school ready to rise from his wool or cotton sack, with the view of casting ridicule on all such statements. He wished, on the present occasion to address a few remarks in answer to the hon. and gallant Member for Bradford (Colonel Thompson). He had understood the hon. and gallant Member to say, that if any one pointed out to him a trade that was protected, he could to that extent show him that it was a trade which robbed some other person. That was the doctrine of the school to which the hon. and gallant Gentleman belonged. In the neighbouring county of Bucks there were two small trades, the beechwood and straw-plait trades, which had been utterly destroyed by free-trade measures; and as the hon. and gallant Gentleman seemed to think that all protection to trade was a political robbery, he hoped when he next addressed the House the hon. and gallant Member would show who had been robbed by these trades. These trades might have displaced foreign trades of the same nature, but that was the whole question in dispute. He admitted that if duties were levied beyond a certain amount on foreign shipping, the effect would be restrictive of its amount; but if they threw open the ports, and left trade entirely free, he should like to know from what source they would derive revenue? The right hon. the President of the Board of Trade had laid down the doctrine that, "right or wrong," it was necessary to pass the measure proposed. It was a strange expression to use, that, "right or wrong," this relaxation of the navigation laws should be made. The hon. and gallant Member for Bradford had given the House what he called a sixpenny illustration of cheapness. A ride in an omnibus was the illustration made by the hon. and gallant Member. He (Sir J. Tyrell) would also take a sixpenny illustration. He admitted that sugar was now 6*d.* per pound; but then it ought to be recollected that the poor-rates in the parish of Marylebone were 8*s.* 6*d.* in the pound. [Mr. Hume: 5*s.* 6*d.*] Having ruined the West Indies, those who advocated free trade would perhaps tell him if the prosperity of the metropolis did not suffer from being deprived of the expenditure of the large incomes which used to be received from the West India estates. The advocates of the doctrines of the Manchester school must surely have closed their ears against the information given to the House by the hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. Muntz), and the hon. Member for Macclesfield (Mr. Williams). Those hon. Members had given them a most gloomy view of trade, yet Ministers seemed to be plunging headlong into difficulty; heedless of the state of Ireland—the state of our colonies—and the increased distress and destitution among the people of this country. The right hon. Member for Stamford (Mr. Herries) was about to present a petition, which represented the destitution and increased vagrancy of the country to be of the most appalling character. It was with regret that he, from time to time, had to make use of similar language; but when he found the Manchester school determined to carry out their principles, and when the state of the country was far from prosperous, he must, in the most decided manner, refuse to give his support to any of their doctrines.

Mr. LABOUCHERE would not enter upon the general question, or remark upon the topics that had been touched upon by hon. Members, as it was now approaching the hour when, by the rules of the House, the adjournment must take place. He hoped, however, that the Committee would allow the resolution to pass, so that the Government should be allowed to bring in the Bill without delay. The Government had, during the recess, thought it right to make communications to some foreign Powers of the purport of the measure introduced last Session, and intended to be now proposed to Parliament, for the purpose of endeavouring to obtain from those Governments, in return, a general notion of the course they were disposed to take with regard to navigation. Those papers would be shortly laid on the table of the House, and be in the hands of Members before the second reading.

The Marquess of GRANBY observed, that the hon. Member for Bridport (Mr. Mitchell) had stated that the trade with Cuba was now almost entirely in the hands of British shipowners; the inference intended to be drawn being, apparently, that British shipping could, without any protection, be able to compete with foreign. If this measure passed, the Americans would enter into the trade with Cuba in such a manner that this country would soon be deprived of it. Another fallacy of that hon. Member (Mr. Mitchell) was, that the consumer would derive great benefit from the repeal of the navigation laws. The consumer might be benefited by the reduction of freight in the case of heavy articles, as, for example, that of timber; but he appealed to the House, and to the hon. Gentleman himself, whether a reduction of freight in the case of sugar, to the extent of the sixteenth part of a penny per pound, would confer any benefit on the consumer. He would not then enter into the general question, reserving his remarks for a future occasion. He would only, then, declare his entire concurrence in the opinion of his right hon. Colleague (Mr. Herries), that the naval superiority of this country depended upon the maintenance of the navigation laws.

Mr. J. O'CONNELL said, an appeal having been made to Irish Members who formerly voted for free trade by the hon. Member for Dorsetshire (Mr. Bankes), he felt bound to say for himself, and he (Mr. J. O'Connell) believed there were some other Irish Members who concurred with him—that, so far was he from repenting of the vote which he had formerly given, he would most willingly follow the same course again. When the corn laws were first introduced in 1815, those who were prominent in the popular agitation in Ireland at that period saw the error of those laws quite as clearly as that House had done three years ago. A political leader told the people of that country that, although it was pretended that the protective system would be a benefit to Ireland, he did not believe it would prove so, observing that Ireland could not really be benefited at the expense of other portions of the empire; and he went into details in support of that view. He (Mr. J. O'Connell) was proud to think that Irish Members had assisted in securing the repeal of the corn laws; and though they had since been deserted by the English advocates of free trade, he trusted they would still vote for similar measures. The loss of life would have been infinitely greater in his own country if the navigation laws had not been suspended; and he believed that his countrymen would be benefited by that cheapening of the cost of food which must arise from the lowering of freights. On these grounds, and on the great principle that all monopoly was an evil, he should, as an Irish Member, record his vote for the removal of all commercial restrictions, and more particularly for the repeal of the navigation laws.

Mr. HENLEY wished to know whether or not he had rightly understood that part of the Government measure which had reference to the coasting trade. He had understood the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Labouchere) to state in effect, that an American vessel might, under the provisions of that Bill, on her arrival at Southampton, discharge a part of her cargo in that port, take in fresh goods, and then proceed to London, or any other English port; and that a French steamer coming from Havre might call at Ramsgate and take in cargo and passengers, and then proceed to another English port. He wished to know whether that view was correct.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, that, undoubtedly, under the plan which he proposed to introduce, an American vessel would be able to call at one port, take in a cargo, and then proceed to another port; but she would not be able to carry on a regular to-and-fro coasting trade.

The following Resolution was then agreed to:—

Resolved—"That it is expedient to remove the restrictions which prevent the free carriage of goods by sea to and from the United Kingdom and the British Possessions abroad, and to amend the Laws regulating the Coasting Trade of the United Kingdom, subject nevertheless to such control by Her Majesty in Council as may be necessary, and also to amend the Laws for the Registration of Ships and Seamen."

Resolution *reported* and *agreed to:*—Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Bernal, Mr. Labouchere, and Lord John Russell.

MR. HERRIES expressed a hope that the next stage would not be fixed until ample time had been given for examining the papers which had been referred to by the President of the Board of Trade.

House resumed.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE WEST INDIES.

On the Order of the Day for going into Committee of Ways and Means,

MR. GOULBURN said, he wished to put a question to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. At the close of the last Session, Parliament, in consequence of the distressed state of the West India islands, granted to them a loan, on certain conditions as to repayment. Among the islands entitled to the benefit of that loan, was, of course, Jamaica; and the right hon. Gentleman was no doubt aware that, owing to the distressed state of that island, and to the circumstance that it was already encumbered with debts, which there were no means of discharging, the colonists were unable to avail themselves of the benefits intended for them by Her Majesty's Government. The loan having been designed to improve the condition of the colony, by encouraging the immigration of labourers, he wished to ask whether, seeing that the colony had, for the reason which he had stated, declined to accept the loan, the Government proposed to accomplish the original object of the loan by any other mode?

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER regretted that his right hon. Friend (Mr. Goulburn) had not given him notice of his intention to put the question. He was not aware that any island was unable to accept a portion of the loan. No advance, he believed, had yet been made; but he would take care to inform himself as to the facts, and give a reply on a future day.

MR. HUME said, considerable anxiety existed with reference to the budget. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer could then state at what period he would bring it forward; but he hoped he would soon be in a position to do so. Those who felt an interest in the financial state of the country wished to know, before any vote was taken, whether for the Army, the Navy, or any other great public establishment, what means were at the disposal of the Government?

The House then went into Committee, and agreed to a vote of 8,000,000*l.* out of the Consolidated Fund.

HABEAS CORPUS SUSPENSION (IRELAND) BILL.

On the Order of the Day for the consideration of the Report,

MR. J. O'CONNELL hoped the Government would not attempt to proceed with the measure, as by so doing the House would lose one stage of its progress so far as discussion was concerned.

SIR G. GREY said, he proposed that the Bill should pass through that stage, and that the third reading should be the first order of the day for Friday, in order to allow ample time for debate.

MR. J. O'CONNELL proposed that the report should be considered that day six months.

MR. SPEAKER said, the hon. Member could not move that as an amendment; but according to a new rule of the House, if the hon. Member had any clause to propose, it might be received.

MR. J. O'CONNELL would then move as a clause that of which he had given notice as an instruction.

SIR G. GREY observed, that if the hon. Member spoke till six o'clock, the order would of course stand over till next day. He (Mr. J. O'Connell) might certainly occupy the time of the House if he thought proper; but the Government would not receive any convenience from the courtesy of the hon. and learned Member.

MR. J. O'CONNELL would feel great pleasure in doing so. He observed that when a Bill of a much less stringent character was introduced in 1833 by Gentlemen, many of whom formed part of the present Ministry, it was strongly opposed by the present Attorney General. The hon. Gentleman took a prominent part in the opposition. He assisted Irish Members in all their tactics. They frequently referred to him, and always found him ready with his advice and his speech. He awakened the echoes of the House with old traditions of the constitution of England; and he (Mr. J. O'Connell) believed that the doctrines professed by the hon. Gentleman with his lips were deeply seated in his heart.

And it being Six of the clock, Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House till to-morrow, without putting the question.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, February 15, 1849.

MIUTES.] PUBLIC BILLS.—1ª Protection of Women.

2ª Bankrupt Law Consolidation; Criminal Law Consolidation; Larceny Acts Amendment.

PETITIONS PRESENTED. From the Bath Church of England Lay Association, against the Endowment of the Roman Catholic Priests in Ireland.—From the Cuckfield Union, for certain Alterations in the Law relating to Beer Licenses.—From the Cairn Kon Shannon Poor Law Union, complaining of the Inefficiency of the Poor Law (Ireland).—From Sandhurst, for the Adoption of Measures for the Suppression of Seduction and Prostitution.

BANKRUPT LAW CONSOLIDATION BILL.—CRIMINAL LAW CONSOLIDATION BILL.

LORD BROUGHAM moved that these Bills be now read 2ª; but the observations of the noble Lord and some remarks of the LORD CHANCELLOR were inaudible.

Bills read 2ª.

LARCENY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

LORD CAMPBELL moved that this Bill be read 2ª.

The MARQUESS of SALISBURY opposed the Bill, as taking away a discretion which ought to be left to the bench of magistrates. He thought that the doing away with transportation would leave the penitent offender in this country in the power of his former accomplices.

The DUKE of RICHMOND concurred in the views expressed by his noble Friend (the Marquess of Salisbury); and he called upon the noble and learned Lord opposite to state what punishments were to be substituted for simple larceny, if that of transportation were abolished. He also thought it desirable that the House should be informed what were, and what were not, the offences to which it was proposed to extend the operation of this Bill. None were named in it. Whatever punishments were enacted, they should be made certain; for, at present, the Secretary of State continually exercised a power of revising or commuting any sentence for larceny which he might think either too heavy, or not expedient. He suggested that as the Bill was evidently in an imperfect state, it should be referred to a Select Committee.

LORD BROUGHAM agreed with the principle of the Bill, and observed that, whatever alteration was made in the existing law, nothing should be done to make transportation, which, under certain circumstances, was a valuable order of punishment, an infliction upon the colonies. Convicts might safely be sent to infant colonies; but as those colonies became more populous and advanced in civilisation, it should be modified or discontinued. He objected, however, to the Bill being referred to a Select Committee, on the ground that sufficient evidence had been collected upon the subject by the Select Committee on Criminal Law which sat two years ago.

LORD STANLEY defended the local magistracy both of England and Ireland from the inference that they had evinced a disposition to sentences of transportation for larcenies unnecessarily. The whole subject, however, in his opinion, required more consideration than appeared to have been given to it by the noble and learned Lord; and he could not avoid saying that more care ought to have been taken to point out the statutes which it was proposed to amend or repeal. He thought, also, that the Bill should not have been introduced without Her Majesty's Government, at the same time, making some distinct enunciations of their intentions with respect to the much larger question of transportation. That subject now stood in a most unsatisfactory condition. It was made to appear by the official returns that the number of persons sentenced to transportation was very great: but any one relying on this would be very greatly deceived, for not in one case out of ten, or perhaps not in one out of twenty, was the sentence carried into actual effect. Now, it was a matter of great importance that all classes should know that, when once a sentence was pronounced, it would inevitably be carried into effect. But the present state of the law placed the Judges in a very unpleasant situation in this respect. They were in the habit of enlarging upon the enormity of the crime committed by the offender who had been convicted, and then sentencing him to transportation for seven or fourteen years, or for life; yet it was known at that very time that the sentence would not be carried into effect, and that, by an abuse of the dispensing power of the Crown, it would be set aside for some other punishment. He could not help thinking that after the experience they had had of the mode of carrying out sentences, and of altering those sentences at the discretion of the Secretary of State, that the time had come when the law and the discretionary powers of the Home Secretary ought to be more clearly settled and defined; and he, therefore, wished to ask whether it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government, in the course of the present Session, to make any statement to the House, or to introduce any Bill, with the view of more distinctly settling the law with respect to transportation, and of defining the powers of the Secretary of State? He also desired to ask whether the Government intended to adopt any new system with respect to female convicts, for one of the great evils arising from transportation of late years was the great accumulation of males in the penal colonies. So far from the transportation of females being productive of inconvenience or evil, their presence in the colony—subjected as they were to probationary discipline—had been productive of much good. He wished to know, therefore, whether it was intended still to submit female convicts to probationary discipline previous to transportation, and to transport them in greater numbers than males? There was another point to which he begged the attention of the noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies. At the time when he (Lord Stanley) filled the office which the noble Earl now held, it was determined to establish a penitentiary in Van Diemen's Land, in which every female convict should pass the earlier period of her term of punishment, and who, according to her conduct in the penitentiary, should be placed in the higher or lower rank of service; and that no time might be lost in carrying out this plan, an old 74 or 80 gun ship—the *Anson*, he believed, was sent out, and temporarily fitted up as a floating penitentiary, to which every female convict was sent, in order to pass a certain probationary period. The period, however, which was found practicable was too short; because the accommodation the ship afforded being too small—not sufficient to hold half the number of females who were transported in the course of a single year—the period of probation was consequently limited to six months, which was not long enough to create effectual reformation. He had been much misinformed if it were not the fact that striking benefits had followed from the establishment of this floating penitentiary, under all the disadvantages to which it was subjected. But he had been also informed that it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to abandon this principle altogether, and to send out female convicts, if they were sent out, subject to no preparatory or reformatory discipline. He hoped to hear from the noble Lord that he had been misinformed upon this subject. He understood, too, that the person who had the superintendence of this female penitentiary, and who was now in this country upon leave of absence, was under an apprehension, though she had no direct communication with the noble Earl, that her services were about to be wholly discontinued, if the establishment was to be abolished. He begged also to ask for some explanation upon this subject. The person in question had been principal matron at Hanwell Lunatic Asylum, and had proved herself both there and in Van Diemen's Land, a most meritorious public servant; and if his information was correct, it would be only just that some provision should be made for her. In conclusion, he must express his belief that a great work of humanity might be combined with a great political advantage by continuing female transportation to Van Diemen's Land, subject to such reformatory discipline as was applicable to their several cases.

Earl GREY was sorry this conversation had occurred to-night, because there were papers now in preparation on the subject of transportation, which he hoped to be able to lay on their Lordships' table to-morrow, and which, if he had held them in his hand, would have enabled him to speak with greater confidence upon this question. At the same time, he was sensible that the subject was one which was not unnaturally brought under their consideration with reference to the Bill before them; and, as it was one which justly excited the greatest interest, not only in their Lordships but in the public, he felt that, after what had been already said, it was necessary for him briefly to state what had been the measures adopted by Her Majesty's Government. He would only express his hope that, as he was about to speak from memory of the purport of a voluminous correspondence, extending over many months, of which he had not the advantage of having refreshed his recollection, as he would have done had he expected this discussion, their Lordships would pardon him if on points of detail his statement should not be free from error. The noble Lord opposite (Lord Stanley), at the commencement of his speech, had said that he did not ask him (Earl Grey), because he knew what would be the answer, whether he still held exactly the same opinions upon this subject which he had expressed before the inquiry entered into by a Committee of their Lordships' House. The noble Lord was, however, mistaken as to the answer which he (Earl Grey) would have returned to this question. With regard to the main principles of the policy which Her Majesty's Government had announced their intention of adopting with reference to transportation, his opinions certainly had undergone no alteration; but with regard to the practical measures to be adopted in carrying that policy into effect, he admitted that the result of the important inquiry which took place two years ago, and in which the noble and learned Lord opposite (Lord Brougham) had taken a very active part, had been to convince him that a very material modification of the measures originally contemplated was advisable. So far as regarded the more strictly penal part of the sentence of transportation, he meant that part of it during which convicts were subjected to forced labour, he still believed, as he always had done, that this part of the punishment could be inflicted with far better effect in this country than in colonies so remote as Australia. It was an advantage of the greatest importance that in this country the working of the system was under the immediate eye of the Government, so that any faults which might be detected in it admitted of prompt correction; and that it was far easier to secure the services of efficient officers to be placed in immediate charge of the convicts at home than abroad. It was shown by experience to be a serious practical difficulty in the management of convicts at so great a distance as the Australian colonies, that the Governor, exercising only a delegated authority, could not venture to dismiss officers who had been sent out from this country, however satisfied he might be of their inefficiency, unless that could be clearly established to the satisfaction of the Home Government, to which those who are so dismissed invariably appeal; and also that when such dismissals do take place, from the very limited number of persons of the requisite qualifications to be found in the colonies, and the high rate of remuneration which the services of such persons command there, it is scarcely possible to make a satisfactory arrangement for filling the vacancies so occasioned, without sending to England, and consequently the loss of a year or little less. He also continued to think it desirable that convicts sentenced to transportation should eventually go to the colonies, in which there are far greater facilities than in this country for their regaining their former position in society. But the result of the inquiry conducted by the Committee of their Lordships' House, to which he had already adverted, and of the additional information which had been obtained from other sources within the last two years, had led him to modify very materially his views as to the manner in which convicts under sentence of transportation should ultimately be sent to the colonies. Their Lordships might probably recollect that when this subject had occupied their attention about two years ago, he had stated that the intention was, that convicts, after having undergone a preliminary punishment at home, should be sent abroad as exiles, subject to no restraint except that of not being permitted to return home. Instead of that, it was now proposed by Her Majesty's Government that while convicts should still undergo the earlier part of their punishment at home, or at Gibraltar and Bermuda, they should afterwards be sent to the more distant colonies, not as exiles, but as the holders of what were technically called "tickets of leave." Those of their Lordships who have attended to this subject were aware that convicts who hold tickets of leave remain entirely under the control of the Government; they can be ordered to remain in any particular part of the colony which may be appointed for their residence, and they can thus be kept at a distance from the towns, and from the temptations which they would there have to encounter from bad company, and from the easy access to public-houses; they could be required to attend periodical musters, to ascertain that they complied with the conditions thus imposed upon them; and they can be punished for violating those conditions or for any other misconduct by being sent back to confinement and forced labour; but while they behave well and comply with the regulations, they are left in the practical enjoyment of freedom. He thought these were important advantages; and he believed, that if convicts, after undergoing a proper system of reformatory punishment at home, were then placed under these regulations in the colonies, being dispersed in the remote districts where the population is exceedingly scanty, where their labour is most useful, and where they are effectually removed from their former vicious associations, it would be found in a great majority of cases —he was sanguine enough to believe in 99 out of every 100—they would once more become useful members of the community. He thought this expectation was justified by experience as to the effects of the former system of assignment by which convicts used to be dispersed through the colony as assigned servants. Vicious as that system was in many respects, and justly as it was upon the whole condemned, still it was no doubt attended with this advantage, that when a convict was so fortunate as to be assigned to a good master, he generally turned out well, and that very many thus became eventually useful members of the society in which they were placed. With these views the manner in which Her Majesty's Government proposed to carry into effect the sentence of transportation was as follows:—It was proposed that every male convict on whom this sentence was passed, whether for seven years or for any longer period, should eventually, if his health fitted him for transportation, be removed to one of our distant colonies as the holder of a ticket of leave. It was intended that every such convict should in the first instance pass a longer or a shorter time in separate confinement either at Pentonville, Wakefield, or in some other prison conducted upon this plan. The experience which had been obtained of the results of the system of separate confinement continued to be highly satisfactory; and it was found that criminals who had undergone this discipline, when they were afterwards sent to the public works at Gibraltar or Bermuda, did not forget the impression which had thus been made upon their minds, but generally conducted themselves better than those who had not gone through a similar preparation. It is further proposed, that after having passed in prisons, conducted upon the plan of separate confinement, a certain time—which would in no case exceed eighteen months, and would generally be limited to twelve months or less, because experience was believed to have proved that this system of discipline was too severe to be continued without risk for a longer period—convicts should then be sent to some establishment where they could be employed on useful public works. Such establishments now existed at Gibraltar, at Bermuda, and another had just been brought into operation at Portland. In these establishments the system of employing convicts had been greatly improved of late years; and he believed (he spoke from memory, and might very probably be mistaken as to the amount) that at Gibraltar the average value of the work actually done by each convict in the year exceeded thirty pounds, while the expense of their living and clothing, not including their lodging or superintendence, was, he thought, about half that amount. Her Majesty's Government proposed to form, if necessary, additional establishments of the same kind, where convicts might be employed to work in association. The duration of their punishment was intended to depend upon their conduct, of which a regular record would be kept, in order that the time of their release with tickets of leave might be determined accordingly. From these establishments, convicts were to be sent to more distant colonies with tickets of leave. When they reached the colonies, they would be dispersed as much as possible through the country, the great object being so to scatter them as to render it difficult for them to renew their previous acquaintance with each other as criminals. It was farther proposed that convicts thus sent abroad with tickets of leave should not be allowed to receive conditional pardons until they had repaid from their earnings a certain portion of the cost of their conveyance to the colony. Their Lordships were no doubt aware that the expense of transporting convicts was considerable; and he would take this opportunity of remarking that the noble Marquess opposite (Lord Salisbury) had fallen into an error a few nights ago, in calculating the cost of transportation from the cost of transporting emigrants. The fact was that the expense of sending convicts was very much larger, as the ship had to be fitted up as a prison, and a guard had also to be provided. It was not, therefore, proposed that the whole cost of their removal should be required to be paid by convicts from their earnings before they could receive conditional pardons; but as a general rule it was intended that those sent to Australia or Van Diemen's Land should be required to pay 15*l.* each—the Crown, of course, at all times having the discretion of remitting these payments if it should be thought proper to do so. The object of imposing upon convicts the necessity of making this payment was less any pecuniary gain than the moral advantages which were anticipated from it. Under the former system, when convicts were sent as exiles, subject to no restraint, it had been found that they were exposed to temptations from which it was desirable, if possible, to protect them. During the previous period of punishment having been accustomed to have no money at all, it was too violent a change for a convict suddenly to find himself, from the high value of labour in the colony, in possession of a much larger income than he had enjoyed in any previous period of his life. The temptations also to which he was exposed, were increased by the cheapness of spirits in these colonies. Hence he thought that it would be a great moral advantage to the convicts, that they should have a strong motive given to them to save a portion of their earnings in order to obtain conditional pardons. This farther advantage would also result from the measure, that it would probably tend to diminish the objections which would otherwise be entertained by the colonists to receiving convicts among them, for it was intended that the sums recovered from the convicts, instead of being applied towards repaying the expenses incurred by this country, should be added to the funds applicable to emigration, in order that by increasing a free and wholesome emigration the moral evils which would result from sending convicts alone might be neutralised. He had already observed, that with a view to the ultimate reformation of these unfortunate persons, the Government had considered it advisable that they should be dispersed over as wide a field as possible, and for this purpose various colonies should be opened for their reception. He had accordingly entered into correspondence with the Governments of several colonies to which convicts were not now sent, and more particularly New South Wales and the Cape of Good Hope. From the Government of New South Wales, he had received a despatch transmitting resolutions adopted by the legislative council of that colony, in favour of again receiving convicts on certain terms. The terms proposed were such as it would not be possible to accede to; but still from the correspondence which he should to-morrow lay upon the table of the House, their Lordships would perceive that he considered himself justified in sending, for the present at least, a certain number of convicts with tickets of leave to that colony. With regard to the Cape of Good Hope, he considered that the dispersion of the population over so very extensive a territory, and the great demand which existed for labour, afforded peculiar advantages for the reception of convicts. He was, however, sorry to say that he had received from the Governor information that the announcement of the intentions of Her Majesty's Government on this subject had given very great dissatisfaction to the colonists. But he confessed that while they were only required to receive a very moderate number of convicts, who had undergone a previous course of reformatory discipline, this was a service which the colonists could render to the mother country without any real injury to themselves; and considering what this country had done for the Cape colony, he thought they had a right to expect that it should not refuse them this assistance. He could not forget that in the last Session the British Parliament had granted above a million of money for the extraordinary military expenses of the Kaffir war, in addition to the heavy charge of the ordinary pay of the large number of troops employed. He therefore thought that after this country had made such sacrifices in favour of one of the colonies, when the colony in its turn had an opportunity of rendering a great service to us without injury to itself, it should not refuse to do so. Accordingly, as very great difficulty had of late been experienced in disposing of the increased number of convicts sentenced to transportation, Her Majesty's Government had thought it right to direct that 250 convicts who had undergone a preliminary punishment at Bermuda, should be sent to the Cape; and orders to that effect had not long since been issued. Having thus explained the general nature of the measures which had been adopted, he begged to observe, with reference to the remark of the noble Lord opposite (Lord Stanley), as to the necessity of some legislative sanction for the policy which had been adopted, that these measures were strictly in conformity both with the letter and with the spirit of the existing law. The system of punishment was precisely that which Parliament had originally contemplated by transportation. That punishment consisted in exile combined with forced labour. It had lately been the practice to subject convicts to forced labour in the colonies, allowing them at the expiration of a certain period to obtain tickets of leave. The only alteration proposed was, that in future the period of labour before obtaining tickets of leave would be passed in this country, or at Gibraltar, or Bermuda, instead of in Australia; but convicts would still ultimately be sent to the colonies. This was strictly in accordance with the law. Various Acts of Parliament had expressly provided that convicts might be sent to the colonies at any period, and that they might be kept at hard labour in establishments, either afloat or on shore, for the whole or any part of the time for which they had been sentenced, as the Government might think proper. Indeed, not many years ago, it was almost the invariable rule to send, not to the colonies, but to the hulks, convicts sentenced to only seven years transportation, and after four years servitude they were generally discharged. He now came to the case of female convicts. He agreed with the noble Lord (Lord Stanley) as to the distinction to be made between male and female convicts. There was much less objection to sending female than male convicts to Van Diemen's Land. It was also more necessary to do so, because there was more difficulty in making any arrangement for the preliminary punishment of females at home. The Pentonville system was found to be one to which females could hardly be subjected; and any system of discipline which had hitherto been tried for female convicts associated together in considerable numbers had failed to produce satisfactory results. With regard to the *Anson*, to which the noble Lord had adverted, he was sorry to say that it had proved a complete failure. Both the lieutenant governor of Van Diemen's Land, and the comptroller of convicts in that colony, had expressed the strongest opinion to this effect; and the establishment for female convicts on board the *Anson* was accordingly to be broken up. He believed that the failure of this establishment was in a great measure to be traced to the disadvantages to which hulks were always exposed. Experience had proved that a floating prison was the worst of all prisons, both for discipline and economy. A hulk cost much money both in fitting up and in repairs, while the space which it afforded was far too confined either for discipline or for ventilation. Hence it was the object of the Government, everywhere, by degrees, to get rid of hulks, and to transfer the establishments to buildings on shore. With regard to females, it was also the decided opinion of Sir W. Denison, in which he entirely concurred, that any period of imprisonment to which they were to be subjected, should be inflicted upon them rather at home than in the colony, in order that the system might be closely watched, and that any defects might be promptly and speedily remedied. At the same time, punishment of transportation did not require in the case of women, so much as in that of men, that it should involve anything beyond mere removal from this country. It was in general a far greater punishment to a woman than to a man to be placed in the disgraceful position of a convict, and to be sent away from her friends and relations; and he, therefore, thought that, even if female convicts were allowed to receive tickets of leave very soon after their arrival in the colony, there would be little danger that transportation would not still be regarded by them as a very severe punishment; while to male convicts transportation would be no punishment at all if they were at once sent to the colonies, and then allowed to receive tickets of leave. The case of female convicts was altogether one of very great difficulty, on which he did not feel that any final determination could yet be come to. It was a question for consideration whether Parliament ought to be asked to extend the means of subjecting them to an effective prison discipline in this country; but in the absence of proper prisons for this purpose, he believed that the best that could be done was to allow women who were transported to obtain tickets of leave on their arrival in the colonies. He had only to add, with regard to Mrs. Bowden, to whom the noble Lord had alluded, that he was fully aware of her claims upon the Government, and that when the establishment on board the *Anson* was broken up, some provision for her ought undoubtedly to be made.

LORD CAMPBELL replied: He would say, that, with regard to this Bill, it had been brought in after great consideration and prepared with great care.

After a few words from the EARL of

MOUNTCASHELL and the DUKE of RICHMOND,

Bill read 2ª.

House adjourned until To-morrow.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, February 15, 1849.

Notice taken that forty Members were not present.

House counted; and forty Members not being present,

The House was adjourned at ten minutes after Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, February 16, 1849.

MINUTES.] PETITIONS PRESENTED. From Scariff, complaining of the present System of Poor Law (Ireland).

House adjourned to Monday next.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, February 16, 1849.

MINUTES.] PUBLIC BILLS.—1° Navigation; Petty Sessons; Distraining for Rates; Qualification and Registration of Voters (Ireland); Elections and Polling Places (Ireland).

3° and passed:—Inland Revenue.

PETITIONS PRESENTED. By Mr. J. O'Connell, from Limerick, praying for the Adoption of that Place as a Port for the Despatch and Arrival of the American and West Indian Mails.—By Mr. Vernon Smith, from the Board of Guardians of the Northampton Union, in favour of the Suppression of Mendicancy.—By Captain Pechell, from Mr. Thomas Hedgcock, a Master in the Royal Navy, residing at No. 3, Hales Place, South Lambeth, complaining of the Deduction from the Pension of Lieutenant Alexander Murray.—By Mr. Edward Stanley, from Shipowners and Others, of Maryport, against a Repeal of the Navigation Laws.—By Lord Dudley Stuart, from a Public Meeting, held at the Scientific Institution, Edward's Street, Portman Square, for an Alteration of the Poor Law.—By Mr. Osman Ricardo, from the Guardians of the Worcester Union, respecting the Law of Settlement.—By Mr. Clements, from the late Guardians of the Carrick-on-Shannon Union, for an Alteration of the Poor Law (Ireland).—By Viscount Jocelyn, from the Guardians of the Poor of the Borough of King's Lynn, in favour of the Poor Law Union Charges Bill (1847-8).—By Lord Dudley Stuart, from John Imray, Civil Engineer, for Inquiry respecting Public Libraries.

MINISTERS' MONEY (IRELAND).

MR. J. O'CONNELL rose to ask the Secretary for Ireland, whether it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to act on the recommendation of the Select Committee appointed last Session—

> "To consider and report upon the state and operation of the laws respecting Ministers' Money in Ireland, and to report whether any and what amendments in those laws would be expedient, and whether any and what fund may be rendered available for the purposes to which Ministers' Money is now applied"—

and whether the Government intend, according to the said recommendation, to bring in a Bill for the Abolition of Ministers' Money; and if so, at what period of the Session?

SIR W. SOMERVILLE replied, that the subject was receiving the greatest consideration; but he could not promise that all the recommendations of the Committee would be carried into effect.

THE NEW HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

MR. B. OSBORNE wished to put a question to the hon. Member for Lancaster (Mr. Greene). Hon. Members had recently received a circular from the Commissioners of the New Houses of Parliament, calling upon them to point out any arrangements which might appear to them to be desirable with respect to the arrangements in the new House of Commons. He (Mr. B. Osborne) wished to inquire, first, whether those arrangements would be allowed to interfere with Mr. Barry's original plan; and if so, who was to be responsible for the expense: secondly, whether the dispute between Dr. Reid and Mr. Barry, which had now lasted four years, had been finally adjusted by the Commissioners: and, thirdly, whether the Commissioners had drawn out any report which would inform the House what the ultimate expense of the Houses would be, and what would be the probable time of their completion?

MR. T. GREENE said, the circular to which the hon. Member (Mr. B. Osborne) alluded, had been sent round to all the Members of the House of Commons, and arose from the circumstance of the Commissioners wishing to have the views of hon. Gentlemen as to the formation of any arrangements in the interior of the new House which might add to the general convenience of all. They were not matters which could interfere with the plans of the architect, or create any great expense; but every hon. Member must be aware that there were various local arrangements, which might be made in the interior of the building, which would add greatly to the convenience of hon. Gentlemen, and to the facility of the despatch of business; and the Commissioners have been desirous of ascertaining the views of hon. Members on those matters in order to their satisfactory settlement; and, so far from their causing any additional expense, on the contrary, expense would rather be saved by having those matters done at the present moment. As to the dispute between Dr. Reid and Mr. Barry, it had been arranged, before the appointment of the Commissioners, that Dr. Reid should have the full arrangement of the ventilation of the House of Commons, but that his duties should be confined to the House of Commons alone; and the Commissioners had taken great pains to afford Dr. Reid every possible facility—including the means of the inlet of fresh air and the outlet of foul air—which he required, consistently with the construction of the building; and he believed the whole thing had been arranged in a manner perfectly satisfactory. As to the question of expense, the Commissioners had not prepared any report; but, in obedience to the orders of the House, there were returns prepared of the expense already incurred, and an estimate of the future expediture in the completion of the House; but on looking over the copy of them, which he had received a day or two back, he had observed some inaccuracies, and he was therefore unwilling to lay it upon the table until they were corrected; but he expected to be able to lay them before the House on Monday next. As to the question respecting the period of the completion of the House, it was impossible for him to answer it; the matter rested rather with the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who could perhaps mention what sums the state of the finances would enable him to advance for the purpose each year.

Mr. HUME observed, that there should be some plan furnished, in order to enable hon. Gentlemen to see what it was that was intended to be done. Without some such plan it was impossible for any one going to the House, as he had done yesterday, to understand what was being done. There were doors shut up here, and walls freshly broken for windows and doors there, and he, therefore, suggested that some information should be given of the real state of the House.

Mr. T. GREENE said, the plans were all in Mr. Barry's office, who would afford every facility to hon. Members to obtain any information they might require.

Mr. HUME inquired, who bore the expense of the building up and knocking down which he had mentioned; or was there any estimate of the expense?

Mr. T. GREENE was not quite aware what the hon. Member (Mr. Hume) referred to. There were certain alterations rendered necessary last year, to afford accommodation to the different officers of the Houses; and for that purpose an estimate of the additional expense had been prepared, which had been submitted to the Commissioners of the Treasury for their sanction.

THE WOODS AND FORESTS.

Viscount DUNCAN said, that seeing that the First Commissioner of the Woods and Forests had no longer a seat in that House, he wished to know from the noble Lord at the head of Her Majesty's Government, to whom questions connected with the administration of the Woods and Forests were to be addressed in that House?

Lord J. RUSSELL said, if his noble Friend (Viscount Duncan) gave notice of his questions to the Secretary to the Treasury, arrangements would be made by which they would be answered.

CEYLON.

Mr. BAILLIE said, that on referring to the papers connected with Ceylon, that had been laid on the table of the House, he found that a despatch had been received at the Colonial Office on the 31st October, 1848, communicating the important fact that certain executions under martial law had taken place in the island; and he also found that these papers contained no despatch from Earl Grey to Viscount Torrington of a later date than the 24th of October, 1848, or one week previous to the receipt of the former despatch. The question which he wished to ask was, whether any despatch, of a later date than the 24th of October, had been sent out from the Colonial Office to Viscount Torrington, either approving or disapproving of these executions under martial law; and if so, whether there was any objection to lay them on the table before the Motion which was fixed for Tuesday next should come on.

Mr. HAWES said, the latest despatch from Earl Grey to Viscount Torrington, in the papers that had been laid before the House, bore date, if he recollected rightly, on the 24th October. The latest despatches to which answers had been received were on the table. One of them was a general despatch from Earl Grey containing his entire approval of the measures that had been adopted by Viscount Torrington for the suppression of the rebellion. That approval was full, entire, and explicit. There was a despatch subsequent to that, but it was of a strictly formal nature. He had no intention to lay any farther papers on the table at present.

Mr. HUME wished to know, whether there was any objection to lay on the table the instructions of Earl Grey, in which he approved of the withdrawal of the taxes which had been the cause of the rebellion. The newspapers of the day contained an account of his entire approval of what had occurred; so it was to be hoped that the House would be put in possession of the despatch containing such approval.

Mr. BAILLIE said, he did not think the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hawes) appeared to understand the question which he had put. He had asked whether any approval had been sent out by Earl Grey, in answer to that despatch of Viscount Torrington in which the fact was announced that certain executions had taken place under martial law? The hon. Gentleman had merely alluded to a despatch of Earl Grey, which bore date before the receipt of that despatch.

Mr. HAWES: I stated that there is a despatch generally approving of the measures which Viscount Torrington adopted for the suppression of the insurrection, which includes both the trials by court-martial and the trials before the Supreme Court; but there is no special despatch approving of the executions which followed.

EMIGRATION.

Mr. SCOTT referred to a recent statement in the papers to the effect that emigration was, to a great extent, taking place in Dorsetshire under the encouragement of the Emigration Commissioners, who, it was alleged, had sent down an agent who had given free passages already to upwards of a thousand persons; and he (Mr. Scott) begged to ask the Under Secretary for the Colonies (Mr. Hawes) whether this were true: if so, whether Government would extend similar encouragement to emigration from other counties, where there was an equal anxiety to secure such aid; and, if not, whether the Government did not consider that this would unduly stimulate emigration from a particular district? The hon. Member added, that he understood, so numerous were the applications for aid, that an emigration ship could easily be freighted with emigrants every two days.

Mr. HAWES intimated that he was not perfectly acquainted with the facts, but that he would make inquiry, and begged that the question might be repeated on some future day.

THE PUNJAUB.

Mr. G. THOMPSON inquired whether there were no papers to be laid before the House relative to the deaths of Messrs. Agnew and Anderson at Moultan, in the month of April, 1848; and relative to the war which has been carrying on in the Punjaub from that time to the present?

Lord J. RUSSELL said, that no paper had been yet laid on the table of the House with regard to the former occurrence, but that as soon as the operations now carrying on in the Punjaub should be brought to a termination, the necessary documents should be laid upon the table.

THE NAVIGATION LAWS.

On the Motion of **Mr. LABOUCHERE**, the Navigation Bill was read a first time.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, that he had intended to have proposed that the second reading of the Bill should be fixed for that day fortnight, as he conceived that there would be abundant time in the interim for the country to consider a measure that did not materially differ from the Bill of last year; but as he understood from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Stamford (Mr. Herries) that it would be inconvenient for him to attend that day, he begged to move that the second reading of the Bill be fixed for Monday, the 5th of March.

Mr. J. L. RICARDO complained that no sufficient reason had been assigned for such a long postponement of the Bill.

Mr. HERRIES said, that the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) had told them the other night, that it was intended to lay certain papers on the table connected with this subject; and if such were the case, as he hoped it was, the postponement suggested was surely not too much to ask for. He hoped, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Labouchere) would not be induced by any pressure from behind to alter his resolution.

Lord J. RUSSELL said, he did not think that the postponement from Friday to Monday was a matter of any very great importance.

Mr. WAWN wished to know whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer was prepared to state what concessions he was disposed to make to the shipping interests of this country, in the event of the navigation laws being repealed?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER said, it would be time enough to state what he was prepared to do upon that subject when the second reading of the Bill came on.

Mr. J. L. RICARDO asked the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Labouchere) when the papers promised by the noble Lord, which were alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Herries) would be laid upon the table of the House; as they would be enabled to judge, by a perusal of them, whether the postponement of the question was made for the purpose of giving time for their presentation and examination, or merely to suit the convenience of an individual?

Mr. HERRIES said, that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Labouchere) was quite distinct in the reply he had already given. It was not on account of the papers that the question was postponed, but in order that the opponents of the measure might have time to consider the Bill founded upon resolutions that had been permitted to be passed without discussion or delay.

Mr. HUME hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would answer the question put by his hon. Friend (Mr. Wawn). It would be well that the country should know, for instance, whether the right hon. Gentleman (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) was prepared to take off the duty on timber, so as to put the British shipbuilder on the same footing as the foreigner.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER said, that such a course would be very inconvenient. The Government would state what they were prepared to do when the discussion took place.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, that with regard to the papers referred to, it was the intention of his noble Friend (Viscount Palmerston) to lay them on the table of the House almost immediately.

ARMY AND NAVY ESTIMATES.

Mr. Maule brought up the Army and Mr. Ward the Navy Estimates. Laid on the table.

Mr. HUME repeated the question which he had before put, whether Government would lay on the table, at an early period before the discussion of these estimates came on, the difference between these estimates and those of last year, so that the House might see how far the reductions which had been made were in conformity with the recommendations of the Committee?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER replied, as we understood, that the hon. Member ought to be the last person to ask such a question, being himself fully acquainted with the subject; and seeing that he (Mr. Hume) must know that a comparison was always given between the estimates of the present and the past year.

CHANNEL ISLANDS.

Mr. EWART observed, that a Commission had been appointed to inquire into the state of the criminal law in the Channel Islands: he wished to know whether the recommendations, or any part of the recommendations, of that Commission were about to be adopted?

Sir G. GREY: The report of the Commissioners of the Channel Islands was referred by me to the Governor, with instructions that it should be laid before the States, in order that the co-operation of the States of these islands might be obtained. I am now in communication with the Governor, and I hope it may lead to a satisfactory result.

THE LATE COLLIERY ACCIDENTS.

Mr. CAYLEY wished to ask a question of the Home Secretary (Sir G. Grey), and as the question was connected with a calamity by which a fearful loss of life was sustained, he trusted the House would permit him to enter into a short explanation of the question he had to ask. The calamity to which he referred was the late explosion in the Darley main colliery pit, near Barnsley, which was attended with the loss of 75 lives; and unfortunately this was not a singular instance of such a terrible misfortune, for these explosions were constantly occurring, and all from one cause—the want of sufficient ventilation. On the lives sacrificed at Darley main an inquest had just concluded its sitting. Many witnesses, both practical and scientific, had been examined. The coroner had delivered a charge of great intelligence, and evidently dictated by strong feelings of humanity, and an earnest desire to prevent a repetition of such disasters. The jury seemed to have been composed of enlightened persons; to their verdict they added an opinion of the cause, and a recommendation. All the parties, witnesses, coroner and jury, agreed that these explosions were attributable to one cause and one alone—deficient ventilation; and the coroner and jury both recommended a system of Government inspection to see to the proper ventilation of coal mines. Under the present system this proper degree of ventilation could not take place. In 1835, a Committee of this House sat upon the subject of accidents in mines; they reported only evidence. But a number of gentlemen in the county of Durham formed themselves into a committee on this subject in 1839, and sat three or four years; the conclusion they came to appeared to be an unanimous opinion, as expressed in their report, that there remained not a shadow of a doubt of the northern coal mines owing their dangerous condition to the want of ventilation, and to that alone; and they came also as decidedly to the opinion that the system of high pressure steam ventilation was fully adequate to the perfect ventilation of a mine. Under these circumstances, the questions he wished to put were, whether his right hon. Friend had received a report of what passed at the inquest—whether he was prepared, now that the subject and the cause of the accident were so well known, to ask leave of Parliament to institute a system of inspection—or whether he felt disposed to adopt any other system, such as rendering it necessary for local coal mine viewers to pass an examination before a competent board, as to their qualifications for their office, before they were permitted to undertake a business in which the safety of human life was so intimately concerned?

Sir G. GREY said, that immediately upon the occurrence of the accident, he had received a communication from the clerk to the magistrates of the district, suggesting that it might be desirable that some gentlemen should be sent down, on the part of the Government, to watch the proceedings. He (Sir G. Grey) wrote to the coroner, and sent down two gentlemen, Mr. Warrington Smith and Mr. Tremenheere, to examine the mine, and to give their evidence to the jury. The coroner had since transmitted to him (Sir G. Grey) a local newspaper, containing the evidence of those two gentlemen, the summing up of the coroner, and the verdict of the jury. The verdict, he should observe, was one of "accidental death," with a recommendation to the proprietor of the mine that a better mode of ventilation should be adopted, and that a scientific and practical person should be appointed to occasionally inspect the collieries of the district. The subject of colliery accidents and Government inspection had been brought before the House on other occasions. The hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. Wakley) had proposed a plan, but it had been dismissed by the House, because it appeared too complicated. It would have required a very large and expensive staff. Mr. Tremenheere's attention had been directed to the subject, he having been engaged in the examinations relative to the employment of women and children in mines. He had also visited several parts of the Continent, and had prepared an interesting report, which had just been presented to him (Sir G. Grey), and which he would lay before the House in the course of a few days, showing the system of regulations and inspection imposed in some parts of Germany. The system was very minute —too minute, he feared, for this country. It was clear, however, that if inspectors were appointed, they ought to have the power, in cases where ventilation was neglected, or where other circumstances occurred to endanger the safety of human life, to take such steps as were necessary to insure the safety of those employed in these works. The subject was, however, under consideration, but the great difficulty was the mode of providing a sufficient system of superintendence, which would not involve too large an expenditure.

VANCOUVER'S ISLAND.

Mr. HUME wished to know whether a copy of the case submitted to Her Majesty's Attorney General and Solicitor General, and the opinions thereon, respecting the capability of the Hudson's Bay Company to hold land as a grant from the Crown on the North West Coast of America, referred to in the letters of Mr. Hawes and Sir H. Pelly, printed in the Parliamentary papers presented to the House last August, respecting Vancouver's Island, would be laid upon the table?

Mr. HAWES replied, that the opinions had been obtained solely by and at the expense of the Hudson's Bay Company. The Government had, therefore, no power to obtain or present them to the House.

THE COUNTING OUT.

Sir J. WALSH was anxious to avail himself of this opportunity of addressing a question to those hon. Members of the House who were more familiar with the form of business than he could pretend to be—he meant in reference to the course adopted yesterday of counting out the House during the period of the transaction of private business. He (Sir J. Walsh) considered it a most unusual one. It was well known that much complaint had arisen that Houses had not been made; that forty Members had not been present; and there had been at times a great deal of recrimination and accusation against the Government for preventing the formation of a House. It was also well known that the public debates had unfortunately not attracted a large portion of the attention of the House, and hon. Members had frequently exercised the privilege of counting out the House on those occasions; but he begged to submit to the House, and those hon. Gentlemen who were conversant with its forms, whether it was not very unusual for a Member, after a House had been made, and before the period of the transaction of public business, to avail himself of the privilege of counting out the House, and thus losing the whole of the labours of the House for the evening. On the present occasion there was a most important Motion coming forward, attracting a large share of attention from Irish Members; and if any Member counted out the House to abridge the labours of the House, he did so with a very mistaken view. A legitimate occasion would thus have arisen for discussing a most important question. So far from there being any gain—so far from the House thereby abridging its labours—he was convinced these questions would reproduce themselves in a manner much more inconvenient to the House. It was really very desirable that they should have some understanding on this head, and he should be glad to hear the opinion of Mr. Speaker on the subject. It was known that a great deal of important private business did take place between four and five o'clock, which was attended by few Members; and it had generally been the understanding of Members that it was not necessary technically to keep a House during that hour. If it was necessary, let this be understood. The privilege might hereafter be exerted in a manner highly injurious to the public service.

Mr. HUME rose to notice the subject, and to submit to the House whether they could not apply a remedy. He was very unwilling to alter the Orders of the House, or to propose any thing that should not be perfectly safe. He thought that if the House were of opinion with him, that on every occasion when it might be thought fit by any individual to count out the House, or to take notice that there was not a quorum, such Motion should be seconded; they would then have some security against such Motions. He (Mr. Hume) submitted that to-morrow, or on an early day, that should be made a resolution of the House.

Major BLACKALL, as the person most interested, his Motion having been the one alluded to as so important to the Irish Members, begged to set himself right. He did not himself complain of the exercise of the privilege by which the House had been counted out, for he admitted that, after the long debate that had taken place on Irish affairs on the preceding day, he could not blame hon. Gentlemen in being unwilling to have it repeated. But he understood it had been alleged that he had yielded to certain influences, and had resolved, in consequence, not to press the question. That he begged leave to deny. He thought the subject a most important one, and it was his anxious desire to have brought it on.

Mr. BOUVERIE reminded the House of an instance, in a former Session, when the House had been counted out during the time of private business.

Mr. SPEAKER said, that the hon. Baronet (Sir J. Walsh) having asked him a question with regard to the usages of the House, he could only state that whenever (whether during the hours devoted to private or public business) an hon. Member took notice that there were not forty Members present, it was the duty of the Speaker to count the House forthwith and ascertain the fact. The hon. Member, in the course he had taken on the preceding day, had not been guilty of any irregularity, although it certainly was an unusual proceeding.

Lord J. RUSSELL said, with regard to Members of Government, when they attended at four o'clock to make a House, they very naturally went back to their offices again to finish the business which they were obliged to leave in order to come down at that time.

COPYHOLD ENFRANCHISEMENT.

Mr. AGLIONBY said, that he had the permission of the right hon. Baronet at the head of the Home Department (Sir G. Grey) to put a question to him on a matter of great consequence. A Committee was appointed many years ago to inquire into the enfranchisement of copyholds. That Committee laid on the table a recommendation that the enfranchisement which was then voluntary should be made compulsory, and that a Bill should be brought in to authorise the Commissioners to proceed to the compulsory enfranchisement of copyholds. From that day to this he had repeatedly brought the question before the House, and had applied to Government to promote that measure. Last Session a Bill was introduced into the other House for effecting that object. Towards the end of the Session the Bill was withdrawn. He now asked whether it was the intention of the Government to bring forward a measure for the compulsory enfranchisement of tenures; whether they would bring it forward on an early day, and whether it would be brought forward in the other House of Parliament?

Sir G. GREY said, that a Bill had been brought in founded on the report of the Copyhold Commissioners, who recommended a provision for compulsory enfranchisement. The Bill underwent considerable discussion and consideration in the House of Lords, the result of which was, that very great difficulty appeared to exist in carrying into effect the provisions of the Bill. He had since very fully considered the subject, and had thought he was not justified in proposing, during the present Session, a Bill for the compulsory enfranchisement of copyholds, but thought it desirable that a Bill should be introduced for giving increased facilities for their enfranchisement.

THE RIVER PLATE.

Mr. EWART wished to put a question, of which he had given notice, to the noble Viscount the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, which concerned the commerce of this country, and related to the differences which unhappily existed on the River Plate. He had to ask whether there was any propect of the adjustment of the differences existing between the republics on the River Plate, and whether there would be any objection to lay before the House any correspondence upon the subject?

Viscount PALMERSTON said, that he by no means despaired of the settlement of the differences between those two republics, and it might be satisfactory to the House and to his hon. Friend (Mr. Ewart) to know that trade was going on with perfect security. As to laying papers on the table of the House, he thought it would be injurious to the chances of a settlement if those papers were laid on the table at the present moment.

RELATIONS WITH SPAIN.

Mr. BANKES wished to put a question to the noble Viscount the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs as to our relations with the Court of Spain. As long as the late Ambassador, Sir Henry Bulwer, remained unaccredited to any other Court, it was obviously a matter of personal delicacy towards him not to put any question on the subject; but now that it was stated that Sir Henry Bulwer was accredited as Ambassador to another Court, he begged to ask the noble Viscount whether the matters in difference between this Court and the Court of Spain were adjusted, or were in the course of adjustment? The noble Viscount would recollect that at the close of the last Session a subject of this country had been expelled from the dominion of Spain under circumstances which were thought deserving of inquiry. We had never heard the result of that inquiry, nor had the injury to which he was supposed to be exposed in any degree been vindicated. It was desirable that Members should know how far the subjects of this realm could with safety continue in that country; and he begged to ask the noble Viscount whether the differences between this Court and the Court of Spain were in a fair train of adjustment?

Viscount PALMERSTON: The difficulty has not yet been adjusted. As to any correspondence that may be going on at present, it would not be politic now to inform the hon. Member.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE ESTIMATES.

Mr. HUME should repeat the question he had already put to Her Majesty's Government, to which he should say that the answer he had received was neither courteous nor explanatory. They were about to be called upon to vote away 14,000,000*l.* or 15,000,000*l.*, and he wished to know whether Her Majesty's Government was prepared, before going into the estimates, to submit a statement or a budget, or whatever else they pleased to call it, which should show the aggregate amount of the expenditure of the Government, and the means by which those expenses were to be met? Last Session the House did not support him (Mr. Hume) in his exertions to obtain such account, and the consequence was, that at the end of the Session they were obliged to submit to loans being raised to meet their annual expenditure, a course which he thought in these days no honest man should adopt or submit to. They were now again called upon to do the same thing—to spend money first, and then to consider how they were to pay it—how they were to find the means of meeting the obligations they had contracted. He therefore begged to ask the Government whether it was their intention to submit a statement of the ways and means as well as the expenditure in Committee?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER replied, that the usual course was not to lay the budget before the House before the estimates were voted. The usual course was to vote the estimates, and then to make the financial statement.

Mr. HUME said, that that was what he called a system of expending money first, and voting the provision for it afterwards. He gave notice that he would oppose it when the votes were asked for.

Mr. DISRAELI observed, that some time time ago the House had been informed by a Ministerial statement, that it was necessary that there should be a great increase of taxation, but that the estimates had been drawn up with every attention to economy. The House had, however, refused to support the Ministry on that occasion; and it had since turned out, by their own confession, by the confession of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary for the Admiralty (Mr. Ward), in a document lately published, that affairs were managed in his department so that there was not an audit even of the wages account—that no stock was taken, and that no account was kept of expended stores. Under such circumstances it was easy to make a reduction in the expenditure. In such a state of matters, therefore, he thought the suggestion of the hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume) was worthy of consideration; and, moreover, that the time had come, when considerations of what had formerly been the custom ought not to influence the House so much as they had once done.

Mr. HUME said, that he was not one of those who would allow a single shilling for the Army, the Navy, or the Ordnance, until the House and the country should be satisfied that there were sufficient means for the support of these branches of the public service. He would not agree either to violate public faith, or throw away public money; and if even the country Gentlemen intended to pay the slightest attention to the financial affairs of the country, he entreated them—by any regard which they felt for the public interests—to support him in attempting to put a stop to this system of thriftless and blindfold expenditure. The plan seemed to be to spend the money first, and to think how they were to get it afterwards. He did hope that Government would reconsider the course they intended to adopt on this point.

Mr. VERNON SMITH observed, that no reply had been given to the question of the hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume), as to whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would lay on the table a statement of how far the recommendation of the Committee on the naval estimates had been carried into effect. He thought some statement as to this point ought to be prefixed to the estimates.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER observed, that he had not answered this question because he had not heard it. In reply, he had only to say, that his hon. Friend (Mr. Ward), in moving the estimates in question, would state fully, distinctly, and in detail, the points with respect to which the recommendations of the Committee had been carried out. He (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) thought that this would be a more convenient way of conveying information to the House upon the subject, than by printing and prefixing any dry statement to the estimates.

Mr. WARD might add, that all the recommendations of the Committee as to the form of the estimates had been attended to.

Mr. J. B. SMITH observed, that last year the financial statement had been made before the supplies were voted.

Lord J. RUSSELL said, that last year the income tax was to expire on the 5th of April. It was therefore necessary, anterior to that period, to bring before the House the intentions of the Government as to the renewal of that tax. The usual course, however, had been, when the financial year concluded, for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to state to the House what sums he expected to raise in ways and means to meet those which had been voted in supply. To that course they still proposed to adhere, as it seemed to him to be a reasonable and proper course. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose had argued that they had got into debt last year in consequence of voting money before the budget; but the hon. Gentleman ought to recollect that a financial statement had been made at the very beginning of the Session.

Mr. HUME said, from the papers delivered to hon. Members that day, that up to 31st March, 1848, about 7,670,000*l.* had been voted for the Navy, and the actual expenditure had been 8,000,000*l.*, being an excess of 323,000*l.* Now, if this mode of proceeding was suffered without any party being responsible, then he said it would be better to lock the doors of that House, and let them go home to their constituents.

The Report of the Committee of Ways and Means was then agreed to.

HABEAS CORPUS SUSPENSION (IRELAND) BILL.

On the Motion that the Report on this Bill be considered,

Mr. J. O'CONNELL proposed the introduction of the following clause:—

> "And whereas doubts have arisen whether the powers of the Act of last Session, 11 and 12 Vic. c. 35, which are continued by this Act, may not be improperly applied to the restriction of the right of the subject to petition Parliament and to address the Queen in a legal and constitutional manner, and to convoke, hold, attend at, and take part in meetings for the purposes of preparing and adopting peacefully and legally such Petitions and Addresses: And whereas such restriction is and would be contrary to the spirit and purposes of the aforesaid Act, and of this present Act continuing the same, as well as to the Constitution of these Realms; Be it therefore declared and enacted, That nothing contained in this Act, or in the beforementioned Act of 11 and 12 Vic., the powers of which are continued in this Act, does, ought to, or shall be construed or taken to warrant the application of the said powers, or any of them, to the cases of parties convoking, assembling, holding, attending at, and taking part in such legal, peaceful, and constitutional meetings, for the aforesaid legal and constitutional objects and purposes."

He rose to offer what he feared would be a fruitless opposition to the further progress of this Bill. He disclaimed all idea of factious resistance, his only object being to preserve for the Irish people the privileges of the constitution. He wished even to delay the Bill in order that English Members who had inconsiderately supported its earlier stages, might have time for reflection, and for becoming fully aware of its unconstitutional character. He wished this clause to be added, in order that all doubts as to the meaning of the Act might be removed. He submitted that they had a right to have a clear definition, and that the greatest grievance of which the subject had to complain was uncertainty as to the penalties which he might incur. Such definition was all the more necessary when they recollected the letter of the Earl of Clarendon, the document on which the Bill was founded, and the comments which the right hon. Baronet the Home Secretary had made on that letter. The noble Earl would become a despot under this Act, and the Home Secretary would be despotic by deputy, notwithstanding the disclaimers they had heard. The House knew how clear and lucid were generally the right hon. Baronet the Home Secretary's statements when introducing Bills; but in this case, notwithstanding several questions, he (Mr. J. O'Connell) had been unable to get any clear explanation. He had put it to the right hon. Baronet (Sir G. Grey) in every possible shape, and the right hon. Baronet had always evaded his questions. There was yet some hope for the constitution when a Minister was ashamed to avow the unconstitutional character of his measures. What straits must not the right hon. Baronet have been reduced to, when he read a newspaper letter from an Irish adventurer as a ground for preferring an indictment against the Irish people! They might, and no doubt they would, carry their Bill; but they would triumph over the honour of their own country when they struck down the liberties of Ireland. He (Mr. J. O'Connell) appealed to the liberal Members to act up to the examples which their great leaders had set them. They were in this position, that they must either say that those to whom they looked up as the great light of their party, had been wrong in opposing former suspensions of the Habeas Corpus, or they must admit that he was right, and must support him in his present opposition. He would appeal to the Solicitor General (Sir J. Romilly) in the name of his honoured father, and would ask him not to give a vote unworthy of the illustrious name he bore. In 1817 there was a proposal to suspend the Habeas Corpus under circumstances esteemed much more urgent than the present—so urgent, indeed, that a Secret Committee was appointed, and Government did not propose their Bill until fortified with the report of that Committee. Sir S. Romilly on that occasion said—

> "Our ancestors never consented to the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act but in cases of extreme danger; the proposal, therefore, of such a measure now is the more alarming on account of the precedent it will establish. It is now for the first time laid down that under any circumstances of alarm the rights of Englishmen are to be dis-

pensed with. Is there no danger in empowering a few individuals to imprison their fellow-citizens, and that, too, without the slightest responsibility? The noble Lord has said, that all who had before voted for this measure must necessarily concur in it now. Even had I been friendly to the Bill before, I should be decidedly against it now. If there be circumstances of danger, what does it prove, except that the Suspension Bill has not only been inefficient, but has even fomented evil? Before, the grievances of the people might in some sense be said to be imaginary. But now there is a positive and present evil—their liability to the privation of personal liberty without notice and without trial. This measure is giving to the Ministers a power most dangerous to the constitution, and I care not in whose hands that power may be placed. It is one of the melancholy signs of the times, that while day after day new encroachments are making on public liberty, the answer to every complaint is, that the power which is given will be placed in gentler hands. The noble Lord talks of the great responsibility under which Ministers bring forward this measure. Sir, they know they will incur none. They are quite sure this House, whenever they ask for it, will give them a Bill of Indemnity. The violent faction, by their violence, afforded a pretext to the Ministers to destroy or suspend all that is most valuable and sacred in the constitution, while Ministers by their arbitrary measures provoke the people to acts of violence and insurrection."

He (Mr. J. O'Connell) now asked the son of that great and good man, whether he would consent to establish the very precedent which his father had described? He complained that the hon. and learned Member the Solicitor General had commented on some former observations of his in a manner more dexterous than candid; all he had said or meant to say was, that the subject had a constitutional right to agitate by means of legal meetings for any legal or constitutional purpose. The hon. and learned Member the Solicitor General had said, that the Act had not interfered with the Repeal Association; but he would remind the hon. and learned Member that that body had suspended its sittings, and that therefore Government need not take credit for any leniency towards it. Besides, they had the authority of the *Dublin Evening Post* for thinking that it was the intention of the Lord Lieutenant to apply the Act to the Repeal Association. Now, there was a vast difference between the circumstances of the times when the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended in England in 1817, and the circumstances in Ireland at present. Then there was an apprehension of a general rising of the people in Manchester; but had there been a single allegation made now that leaders were going among the people in Ireland, and getting up a general rising in that country? Was it because Ireland was called Ireland that her liberties were now to be taken away? The present Marquess of Lansdowne had opposed the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in 1817, and declared that it was a bad precedent for the evil imitation of future times; but in a few days more, when the noble Marquess would be found supporting the present Bill in another place, let him be asked whether the time had now arrived for the evil imitation of a former bad precedent—whether that which was wrong in 1817 was right in 1849—whether the difference between the two periods was not traceable to the fact that the case in 1817 was the case of England, and that the case in 1849 was the case of Ireland? Of that in 1817 the noble Marquess was in Opposition; of that of 1849 he was in the Ministry. The Duke of Bedford had also opposed the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in 1817, and declared that nothing had been urged in favour of its suspension but necessity, which had in all periods been the tyrant's plea. Either, then, the great men, whose names he had quoted, were wrong in 1817, or the Ministry were right now. He hoped his clause would be allowed to be inserted in the Bill, if it were only to show that although Her Majesty's Ministers were ready to pass a measure of unconstitutional severity for Ireland, they were willing to hedge round the right of the subject to meet for constitutional objects, and not to permit any man to take away that right. He told the representatives of the people of England in that House, that, without any justifiable cause, they were about to violate the constitution in the sister country, and that the Bill would not be productive of the beneficial results anticipated from it. It had been said that capital would find its way to Ireland; but this Bill would scare away capital from that country, for the capitalist would naturally say that there must be something rotten in the state of Denmark when such a Bill was passed, and that there must be something monstrous in its condition which would not bear the light of day; and, therefore, he would be afraid of going there. The circumstances which were said to cause the enactment of such a measure would indeed be ludicrous and absurd, were it not for the indignation which must arise in the mind of every man at seeing such a Bill passed. It was said that one of its effects would be to put down agitation; but were not the leaders of one faction in Ireland at present in prison, and were not the leaders of another distrusted? Irish agitation had only arisen because of English injustice; and now when it was dying away in the dead apathy of utter despair, Her Majesty's Ministers were applying a stimulant to it, for the consequence of the present measure would be, that a burning sense of injustice would rankle in the minds of the Irish people. The people would bide their time, and resuscitate violent agitation, which would waste the strength of England, and exhaust her finances. England had now made her election. She had chosen to hold Ireland by force. She had resorted to the old weapons of coercion. She had declared again for injustice, and violence, and the rule of force, and she must pay for her choice. She was acting towards Ireland as Russia had acted towards Poland. Poland had been left a semblance of her constitution, but an insurrection was got up in 1830, and her constitution was utterly destroyed. The policy of Nicholas, the monster of Russia, was exactly the policy which the Whig Minister was now adopting in Ireland. In the latter country there had been an abortive attempt at insurrection by a small portion of the people, and it remained to be seen whether the A division of police—the detectives as they were called—had not something to do with that insurrection; but, at all events, that attempt was made the groundwork for passing the present measure. He (Mr. J. O'Connell) complained that a Member of the Ministry had been allowed to retain his seat, although it was well known that he had been lately writing article after article in his own newspaper, urging the utter and permanent extinction of the constitution in Ireland. He alluded to the Secretary of the Board of Control (Mr. J. Wilson), the proprietor of the *Economist;* and he thought that things had come to a pretty pass when a Minister, paid out of the revenues of Ireland and England, should write articles of such a description. But the suggestions of that hon. Gentleman were being now adopted by the Ministry. Immediate oppression and injustice was the doom of unhappy Ireland; but the disgrace would be to that House, which had assisted a liberal Ministry in carrying the Bill, and the permanent evil would be to the constitution of Great Britain.

MR. O'FLAHERTY seconded the Motion. He thought that a great mistake had been made in the introduction of this Bill, which should have been delayed until it had been found to be absolutely required. He could not subscribe to all the praise which had been lavished upon the Earl of Clarendon; for the town which he (Mr. O'Flaherty) represented had been proclaimed without the shadow of a reason. As chairman of the grand jury which was sitting at the time, he knew that the Lord Lieutenant had received memorials from all quarters to withdraw that proclamation, but without effect. At the conclusion of the assizes, the presiding Judge had confessed that, from all he could see, there was not a more peaceable or tranquil district throughout Ireland.

Clause read a first time.

SIR G. GREY said, that the only question before the House was, whether the clause proposed by the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. J. O'Connell) should be added to the Bill. He would, therefore, confine himself to the question immediately before the House, and not go through the different arguments which the hon. Member had used. The clause now proposed was identical in substance with the instruction moved by the hon. Gentleman on going into Committee on the Bill, which instruction was withdrawn after a very full discussion; and it was also identical in substance with a clause which the hon. Gentleman had proposed in Committee, and which the House had refused to receive. As the reasons against the instruction and the clause were then stated very fully, and the reasons which induced Her Majesty's Government and a large majority of the House to reject the one and the other were also fully stated before, he (Sir G. Grey) would be occupying the attention of the House to no purpose if he were to re-state the arguments. He would only remind hon. Members that this was the identical clause which on two occasions had been before them already, and which the House had refused to entertain; and he certainly had not heard any arguments that night to induce them to alter their decision.

MR. GRATTAN said, he should record his protest against the Bill on its third reading, but that at present he would not occupy the attention of the House with any remarks upon the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Limerick (Mr. J. O'Connell). He wished, however, to state, that he had received information respecting some individuals who were now confined in prisons in Ireland for political offences, and who were said to be harshly treated. He was sure the Lord Lieutenant would not willingly inflict any harsh treatment on them; but it certainly had been reported to him (Mr. Grattan) that harshness had been used towards them; and if that were intended for their reformation, it would fail in its effect. He wished to ask whether those individuals who were now imprisoned, and who would be entitled to their liberty on the 1st of March, when the present Bill suspending the Habeas Corpus Act would expire, would be continued to be kept in gaol under the measure now proposed? He (Mr. Grattan) hoped Her Majesty's Ministers would consider his question attentively; for some of the individuals to whom he alluded had been taken up on slight information, and it was very hard on them to be imprisoned for months. He understood that there were six or eight individuals in prison who did not appear to be convicted. [Sir G. Grey: Only six.] He hoped Her Majesty's Ministers, upon whom rested the entire responsibility of suspending the Habeas Corpus Act, would administer the present measure fairly, and not adopt the spy system.

Mr. F. O'CONNOR said, he quite agreed with the right hon. Baronet the Secretary for the Home Department that the clause proposed by the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. J. O'Connell) was, in substance, the same as that submitted on two former occasions; but as he had always opposed every infraction of Irish liberty, it was his intention, on the third reading, to give this Bill the most strenuous opposition, It was not his intention to offer any further opposition to the measure in its present stage; but as the noble Lord at the head of the Government seemed to anticipate a very rapid run for the Bill through its several stages, he (Mr. F. O Connor) called upon the Irish Members to oppose it manfully on the third reading. He would say that, during the period he represented an Irish constituency in that House—from 1832 to 1835 — there was not a greater set of slaves in the House than the Irish Members were. He hoped, now, that the Irish Members would not sit there and allow such an attempt on Irish liberty as the present to pass, and that those who had the honour of seats in the House for English constituencies would offer every obstruction in their power to the Bill. He recollected the time when, if the Tories sat on the other side of the House, and the Whigs on the Opposition side, so gross an attempt on Irish liberty as the present would not be allowed to pass. He would not offer a factious opposition to the Bill, but at the proper time he would resist it; and he hoped the noble Lord at the head of the Government would not leave it to the right hon. Secretary for the Home Department, or any *amicus curiæ*, to advance arguments in favour of the measure, but that he would himself get up in the House and boldly state his reasons for bringing it forward. It had been stated that the real cause of disaffection in Ireland had ceased—that there was perfect tranquillity in the country; and, therefore, the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) ought to give the House some better authority in favour of the measure than had yet been cited before he destroyed the constitution enjoyed by the Irish people.

Mr. REYNOLDS said, that having on a former occasion expressed his belief that the Earl of Clarendon had acted temperately and mercifully in the administration of this Act, which was undoubtedly the fact, he wished now to recall the attention of the House to the statement just made by the hon. Member for Meath (Mr. Grattan), with regard to the hardships said to have been inflicted on certain State prisoners in the gaol of Kilmainham. He desired to know whether severity had been practised towards them; and, if so, under whose authority and by whose directions? It was said that they were confined in cells for sixteen hours out of the twenty-four—that they were refused all access to newspapers—and that their friends were refused permission to visit them except under an order from the Under Secretary. Now, it occurred to him (Mr. Reynolds) that there were evils enough in the Suspension Act without adding unnecessarily to its severity; and that, holding in view the safe custody of these prisoners, they ought not to be treated with any unnecessary severity, the more particularly as they had now been incarcerated upwards of eight months, and that, although anxious to be brought to trial, they had been refused that indulgence. He felt it his duty to make these remarks, in order to ascertain if the severity were really practised. He knew that the custody of the prisoners in Kilmainham was not alone entrusted to the sheriff of Dublin, but that a board of superintendence was in existence, who made the orders; and he wanted to know on whose shoulders the blame in the present instance should rest?

Sir G. GREY said, if he had known that it was the intention of the hon. Member (Mr. Reynolds) to put any question with reference to the treatment of the prisoners in Kilmainham gaol, he would have brought his memorandum with him, as he would then have been enabled to answer the question more in detail; but he might state that the Lord Lieutenant had not shrunk from whatever responsibility might attach to him with reference to the circumstance in question, because his Excellency had approved of the steps taken with regard to the small number of prisoners alluded to. Those prisoners had been placed on the debtors' side of the prison, and they had availed themselves of the facilities there afforded to communicate with the public papers, and to write articles in fact which were inhibited. They refused, when requested, to desist from that practice, and in consequence they were removed from that part of the prison to another part.

Mr. F. O'CONNOR wished to ask a single question. Was it the fact that one of the State prisoners, Mr. Meany, who wrote in December what was published in the *Freeman's Journal* in January, was told by Mr. Shaw, the high sheriff, in the presence of the five other prisoners, that if he wrote again he would be removed to the criminal side of the prison? Mr. Meany, it appeared, stated in reply, that he would make his grievances known to the public; and then Mr. Shaw called in six policemen, the governor, and the under-governor, and had the whole of the six prisoners removed to the criminal side. There was not room for them at the criminal side; but five pickpockets and thieves were removed from the criminal side to the marshalsea, in order to make room for those who had been removed from the marshalsea to the criminal side. Mr. Meany, it was said, had not published anything more than the one communication; but he certainly had informed the sheriff that when a grievance occurred, he would take the opportunity of making it known to the public. [*Cries of* "Spoke!"] If hon. Gentlemen who cried "spoke" had such an injury as this to complain of, would they be silent, and come to the cautious conclusion of "Spoke, spoke, spoke?" If the right hon. Baronet (Sir G. Grey) would grant a Committee, he (Mr. F. O'Connor) would undertake to prove that what he had now stated was true, that the whole six prisoners had been removed to the criminal side, not because they had each published, but because Mr. Meany only had done so.

Sir G. GREY said, that he had not before heard the hon. Member for Nottingham's account of the affair, and that he did not believe it to be a correct version. This he had heard—that being in one part of the prison, where they would be entitled to certain indulgences, they, in the opinion of the authorities of the prison (and the Lord Lieutenant approved of the manner in which the authorities had acted), abused the indulgences granted them. The authorities told them that their removal would be rendered necessary unless they discontinued their practices. They refused to discontinue them, and said that force must be used to effect their removal to the other side of the prison. Force was accordingly brought in. The police were introduced; but when they saw the force, which they themselves had called for, they yielded to the order of the authorities, and no force was used. The course adopted by the authorities seemed to be indispensably necessary.

Mr. HUME said, he wished to make an appeal to Her Majesty's Ministers respecting certain prisoners in this country, who were now confined and treated as criminals of the worst description, who were denied pen, ink, and paper, and who were dressed in a manner very unusual in England in the case of political offenders. He had laid before the Government a petition on the subject, and he hoped the case would be considered, and that while public justice was administered, great severity would not be used.

Sir G. GREY said, he thought the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hume) was aware that it must be to the Judge who tried, and not to the Government, that the prisoners must make their application. The Act of Parliament provided that, in cases of misdemeanour, parties might apply to the Judge before whom they were tried, to be placed on the footing of first-class misdemeanants. Applications had been made to the Judges. In some cases, the Judges gave directions for the prisoners' removal to the first class of misdemeanants; in others they had not thought themselves justified in entertaining the applications. Those persons were now suffering the punishment which the law had awarded to them, and any appeal must be made to the Judges, and not to the Government.

Mr. C. ANSTEY was glad that the hon. Member for Montrose had had an opportunity of addressing the House on the present question, and that his sympathies were so exclusively confined to traitors on this side of the water. None of his (Mr. Hume's) sympathy, or that of his friends, was bestowed upon Irish prisoners, nor did they seem to have any respect for the rights of the Irish people, so far at least as from their conduct upon this measure they might judge. Whether the Irish Members of that House would lend themselves any longer to swell the ranks of the Manchester school, when they saw with what indifference that party treated the liberties of the Irish people, was a question which he (Mr. Anstey) would leave for their own good sense to determine. He (Mr. Anstey) had already stated his objections to this Bill, none of which had been removed, and he regarded them as insuperable. However, he would not further discuss that measure, but merely content himself with voting against it upon every fitting occasion. He trusted, however, that the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. J. O'Connell) would not divide the House upon his Amendment, because as the right hon. Baronet (Sir G. Grey) had stated, the hon. Gentleman himself first, and next the House, had already decided against that Amendment. In the long speech with which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. J. O'Connell) had favoured the House, no new argument had been adduced to authorise the House to entertain his proposition. He (Mr. Anstey) thought the Bill bad enough in itself, without its being necessary for the hon. Gentleman to exaggerate its defects or to mis-state its mischievous tendencies. He had mis-stated the object of the Bill, and the mischief that would result from it. It did not propose to make the Lord Lieutenant a despot, by giving to his letters or proclamations the force of law. He (Mr. Anstey) could not listen to such a misrepresentation as this without rising to contradict it, because, if it went forth to the world unnoticed, and gained credence among the people, it might lead to mischievous results. The true and only effect of the Bill would be, that persons apprehended on suspicion of high treason would not be bailable without the order of the Lord Lieutenant in Council, and might be removed from gaol to gaol during their imprisonment. The measure was, therefore, a bad one; but it was scarcely open to any one of the objections urged by the hon. Gentleman that night. His speech would have been a very good one if it had been directed against some other Bill; but he (Mr. Anstey) was bound to say that it did not apply to a single feature of the measure before the House. With respect to the arrests to take place under this Bill, the hon. Member was clearly in error. If arrests took place without probable cause, then the party who ordered it or executed the warrant, would be liable at common law for precisely the same penalties as he would subject himself to if no such Bill as this existed. The only result of it would be, that no action would lie against any judge or other magistrate for refusing bail. The hon. Gentleman was quite wrong if he supposed a warrant could be issued under this Bill, that could not be issued if this Bill had no existence. Again, supposing the Amendment to be adopted (and no one ought to vote for it, unless prepared for its adoption), what would be its effect upon the liberties of Ireland? Why, it would be a positive legislative declaration that might at some subsequent occasion have the most dangerous consequences. It would lay down as settled law, that the constitutional right of assembling for petitioning the Queen or the Parliament for the repeal of an unjust law, was a treasonable practice, or a ground of suspicion of treason. For that reason he (Mr. Anstey) must not only not suport the Amendment, but felt bound to vote against it if the hon. Member persisted in going to a division.

Mr. ROCHE was glad to see somebody come forward at last to volunteer a defence of this measure, for although the hon. Members for England and Scotland generally seemed disposed to support it by their votes, still almost everybody but the Irish Members appeared inclined to fight shy, so far as proving the necessity of so unconstitutional a measure, in the present admittedly tranquil state of Ireland, was concerned. He (Mr. Roche) was not now going to repeat what he had already offered in opposition to this Bill. But the men now imprisoned under this Act in Dublin, although the Executive had refused to bring them to trial, were treated as felons, and in a much worse manner than was endured by the individuals whom the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hume) was so anxious to serve. Could anything show more forcibly than this fact the horrible injustice of such a measure as this for Ireland? He was glad to see the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hume) take the Government to task for the manner in which it had treated the political offenders in this country; but he was sorry to find him, at the same time, encouraging the same Government to continue the suspension of the constitution in Ireland against those who had committed no offence at all. This gave a strong practical proof of the injustice of Englishmen in dealing with their Irish fellow-subjects, who were said to be entitled to the same laws and institutions as their English brethren. He (Mr. Roche) would solemnly warn the Government against the course in which they were embarking. He would earnestly tell them they were commencing a war against the Irish people, in which, in the long run, they would themselves get worsted; their popularity and their characters as public men, already greatly lowered in the estimation of the Irish people, would sustain much greater damage in the eyes of Ireland, if they obstinately persisted in the course they were pursuing, in spite of the Irish people themselves, and in defiance of the earnest remonstrances of their representatives in that House. By warning them of the danger attending so unfair and unjust a procedure, he (Mr. Roche) acquitted his own conscience; and if they refused to give heed to his own advice, and the advice of his friends in that House, upon the shoulders of the Government, and their aiders and abettors, would be the responsibility of such a measure, and all its consequences exclusively rest.

Mr. J. O'CONNELL referred to the remarks of the hon. and learned Member for Youghal (Mr. Anstey), and said he had never before heard the power vested in the Lord Lieutenant, of arresting any man at his own free will and pleasure, designated by any other name than pure despotism.

Mr. ANSTEY had never admitted that this Bill empowered the Lord Lieutenant to arrest any man at his own free will and pleasure. He had asserted quite the contrary.

Motion made, and question put, "That the said clause be now read a second time." The House divided:—Ayes 12; Noes 94: Majority 82.

List of the Ayes.

Fagan, J.
Greene, J.
Meagher, T.
Morgan, H. K. G.
O'Brien, T.
O'Connor, F.
O'Flaherty, A,
Power, N.
Reynolds, J.
Roche, E. B.
Scully, F.
Sullivan, M.

TELLERS.

O'Connell, J.
Grattan, H.

List of the Noes.

Abdy, T. N.
Adair, R. A. S.
Anderson, A.
Anstey, T. C.
Armstrong, R. B.
Arundel and Surrey, Earl of
Baines, M. T.
Baring, rt. hn. Sir F. T.
Bass, M. T.
Bellew, R. M.
Berkeley, hon. Capt.
Bernal, R.
Bernard, Visct.
Birch, Sir T. B.
Blackall, S. W.
Bourke, R. S.
Brotherton, J.
Brown, W.
Butler, P. S.
Campbell, hon. W. F.
Charteris, hon. F.
Cholmeley, Sir M.
Clay, J.
Cobbold, J. C.
Cochrane, A. D. R. W. B.
Cowan, C.
Cowper, hon. W. F.
Craig, W. G.
Cubitt, W.
Davie, Sir H. R. F.
Drumlanrig, Visct.
Duncuft, J.
Ebrington, Visct.
Ellis, J.
Elliot, hon. J. E.
Ferguson, Sir R. A.
Fordyce, A. D.
Graham, rt. hon. Sir J.
Granger, T. C.
Grenfell, C. P.
Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.
Grey, R. W.
Harris, R.
Hawes, B.
Hayter, rt. hon. W. G.
Heald, J.
Henry, A.
Herbert, H. A.
Heyworth, L.
Hobhouse, T. B.
Hood, Sir A.
Howard, Lord E.
Hume, J.
Humphery, Ald.
Lascelles, hon. W. S.
Lewis, G. C.
M'Gregor, J.
Maitland, T.
Matheson, A.
Milner, W. M. E.
Moody, C. A.
Napier, J.
Newdegate, C. M.
Norreys, Sir D. J.
O'Connell, M. J.
Paget, Lord C.
Paget, Lord G.
Palmerston, Visct.
Parker, J.
Patten, J. W.
Raphael, A.
Rawdon, Col.
Rice, E. R.
Romilly, Sir J.
Russell, Lord J.
Scrope, G. P.
Sheil, rt. hon. R. L.
Somerville, rt. hn. Sir W.
Stafford, A.
Stanton, W. H.
Strickland, Sir G.
Stuart, Lord D.
Tancred, H. W.
Taylor, T. E.
Thicknesse, R. A.
Thompson, Col.
Thompson, G.
Vivian, J. H.
Ward, H. G.
Westhead, J. P.
Wilson, J.
Wilson, M.
Wood, rt. hon. Sir C.
Wyld, J.

TELLERS.

Tufnell, H.
Hill, Lord M.

Report agreed to.

RELIEF OF DISTRESS (IRELAND).

Resolution *reported*:—

"That the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland be authorised to direct the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund of the said United Kingdom, of any sum, not exceeding 50,000*l.*, for affording relief to certain distressed Poor Law Unions in Ireland."

Resolution read 2°.

Amendment proposed, at the end of the Resolution, to add the words—

"Provided that the money be advanced only as a loan, and repayment secured by a lien on the lands liable to the uncollected Rates, with power of sale for its recovery."

MR. P. SCROPE said, he hoped the House would not make light of his Amendment, and say that, because of the apparent insignificance of the amount of 50,000*l.*, it did not matter whether the grant of such a paltry sum was made a free gift or a loan in aid of the Irish unions in question. The sum, indeed, might seem very small, but the principle involved in such grants was very large and very important; and as he thought it a very unwise and very pernicious one, he trusted he would be excused for troubling the House with the reasons that compelled him to make a determined stand against it. The House would remember that, only a few months ago, a vote of 132,000*l.*, for similar purposes, had been called for and acceded to in that House, not to say anything of the millions that had been granted to Ireland a very few years ago. But looking to the probable future state of Ireland, could any one possibly suppose that this could be the last vote which they would be called upon to make for a similar purpose? On the contrary, he agreed with the estimate of the hon. Member for Northamptonshire (Mr. Stafford), that the probable wants for these twenty-one unions for the current year, beyond the small sum they would be able to collect from the rates, would be about half a million sterling; and how this deficiency was to be made up was the real question. These twenty-one unions had only paid last year a rate of 2*s.* 1*d.* in the pound; and a deficiency of 10*s.* in the pound had to be made up by the Government and the British Relief Association. A similar deficit—if, indeed, not a greater one—must be expected this year. How, then, was it to be met? Intimations had been given in the public papers the other day, that very possibly a rate in aid would be required in Ireland to supplement these deficiencies. But the number of districts that could afford to contribute towards this fund, after maintaining their own poor, would be very limited, and he doubted very much whether they would be able to collect 3*d.* or 6*d.* additional rate in many unions in Ireland. Many of them were struggling under extraordinary difficulties, and were barely able to support themselves; and to impose a rate in aid upon them would only reduce them into the same bankrupt condition as the twenty-one unions which they were called upon to assist, and thereby increase the number of unions that must be supplied with extra aid. This increase would again decrease the number that could assist the most distressed unions—this, again, would in its turn widen the sphere of bankruptcy; and so the evil would go on, perpetuating and aggravating itself in the most frightful manner. He, therefore, saw no other means of making up the deficiency that must inevitably exist for the next two or three years, except by coming from time to time upon the public treasury. He believed this House had sanctioned the principle, by repeated and large majorities, that the Irish poor had the same claim upon the State to be kept from starvation as the poor of our own country had; and this responsibility could not by any fair means be avoided. The House, he was convinced, would never suffer the people of Ireland to be decimated by hunger, or allow their means of relief to be cut down below the allowance necessary for supporting life; and where, then, were the funds to maintain them to be procured from? Now, he (Mr. Scrope) contended, that all gratuitous grants in aid were opposed to the main principle of our poor-laws, which he believed to be local responsibility for local destitution. Rates in aid were almost unknown in England; still less any application for national grants of this description. The House, however, was now called upon to establish a principle that would absolve the districts from their local responsibility, and thereby offer a direct premium to the non-payment of the rates; they would actually hold out a bonus to parties to resist their collection. He understood it was intended to adopt the rule of not pressing the collection any longer when a difficulty was experienced in raising the rates; but if they laid down this limit, and excused all those who were liable by law just whenever a difficulty was experienced in the process of collection, and then made levies upon other parties who were not now liable either in this country or in Ireland, he maintained they would be pursuing a most dangerous course—a course that would discourage all self-reliance in any given locality, that would open the door to fraud and collusion of every kind, in order to prevent the seizure of property for the rates. Under such a system it would be perfectly impossible, let them use whatever measures of force they chose, to collect the rates, if they once said that parties from whom it was difficult to get their quota must be excused. But look at the injustice they would inflict upon those upon whom they called to supply the deficiency. If some tremendous calamity, or providential visitation were confined to any particular locality—say an earthquake ravaging the entire western coast of Ireland, Parliament might all very well then step in to support the population; but how stood the facts of the present case? Why, the same calamity that had desolated the western coast of Ireland, had extended itself throughout not only the whole of Ireland, but England and Scotland had suffered under its ravages. The west of Ireland was only suffering from the calamity in a peculiar degree, because, for a series of years, the landed property of the country had been abominably mismanaged and abused; and he would ask were the sins of these western landlords to be visited upon the heads of those who had nothing whatever to do with them? If this system were to be followed out, what would become of the stimulus which the poor-law was to give to individual exertion and habits of prudence and self-reliance? Why, they would actually offer a premium to mismanagement and improvidence, if they told the landowners, in this way, that whenever a difficulty in collecting the rates was encountered, we would take upon ourselves the duty of supporting their poor for them from English taxes and aids *ab extra.* How could they expect to stimulate to improvements and the cultivation of the land, which was all that was necessary to restore prosperity to the most wretched districts of Ireland, if they were continually to give the practical lesson, conveyed by those repeated grants, that the landed proprietor's responsibility of maintaining his own poor was at an end whenever it was difficult to levy the rates. It was notoriously undeniable and undenied, that the worst districts were capable by nature of maintaining the population, and that even now there was land enough (without reckoning the millions of waste acres reclaimable) declared by the poor-law inspectors to have been cultivated, and to require all the labour of the able-bodied population of the districts. Why, then, should they not have to maintain their own poor, instead of throwing additional burdens upon the already over-taxed people of this country. Last year the poor-rates in Connaught were only 2*s.* in the pound; and he (Mr. Scrope) had known districts of England where the hardworking ratepayers had to contribute 6*s.* and 8*s.* in the pound for the support of those whose condition was little worse than their own. Why, then, should they be called upon to pay for the poor of Connaught? The rates ought to be exacted from the locality under all circumstances, and not burden other districts which had enough to do to support their own poor. It had been said, that this advance of 50,000*l.* was asked for in order to save life; and advances were, no doubt, necessary for that purpose, but that was no reason why they should exonerate the parties legally liable from the arrears due. The only mode to recover the arrears that were going on accumulating upon many properties was, to make the fee-simple of the land liable for the rates. This was the way in which they might secure repayment either to the board of guardians, or to the national exchequer. The stock, flocks, crops, and everything upon the land was liable to seizure for the rates, and he saw no reason why the land should escape untouched. The effect was, that in the west of Ireland arrears were accumulating upon many farms and estates, and no distress being levied on the land, it was thrown entirely out of cultivation, and no tenant could be got to take the land and stock it, because his property in his crops could be seized at any moment for the arrears of rate. The consequence of this state of things was, more land got out of cultivation every day, and the burdens became heavier upon the neighbouring properties; and thus the area of desolation and ruin spread around until the Government was forced to come forward for rates in aid, or for grants. There would be nothing unjust in taking a portion of the fee-simple of the property in payment of the arrears of rate. The mortgagees had no interest in seeing the land lying desolate because of the arrears; and whilst the land continued uncultivated no rent could be obtained. Suppose an estate in Connaught to be liable to a rate of 1,000*l.* a year, and the arrears upon it to amount to 1,000*l.*, it would be liable to go out of cultivation merely because of these arrears of 1,000*l.*, for nobody would hire it and stock it unless they were paid in the first instance. Now, if they allowed 1-25th of the land—supposing it to be worth 25 years' purchase—to be sold to pay the arrears, the remaining 24-25ths might be set free, and it might be stocked, and pay a rent, as well as the debt of the mortgagee or creditor. The 1-25th might be taken possession of by the board of guardians, and sold to satisfy the arrears; or, if the time was unfavourable for a sale, they might lease it to some one who would stock it, and pay them an excellent rent. They could place it in the hands of an active capitalist, who would improve and cultivate it, and thereby employ the population and benefit the whole community generally. This was not an imaginary case, because in many of the districts many estates had been similarly circumstanced. Mr. Burke, late inspector of the Mayo district, stated that the rate in the Ballina union amounted to 5,000*l.*, but it could not be collected. He said it was chiefly due from landowners; and from the list given in the papers which he (Mr. Scrope) now held in his hand, he found there were eighteen landowners in that district alone whose estates were under receivers. Three were in gaol, and one, who had never paid a farthing yet, had his lands uncultivated and waste, and his house was shut up, to avoid an execution. What hope, then, was there, if they were to excuse these parties the rates? When they made these grants from the Consolidated Fund, or other sources, under these circumstances, it was not the poor they were giving the money of the people to. It was to the bankrupt landowners and their creditors. And why should the ratepayers of Ireland, or the taxpayers of England, be called upon to pay the debts of the bankrupt landowners of Connaught? But independently of this objection, he (Mr. Scrope) asked whether they would have made any real advance towards improving the state of things in Connaught?—whether they would not only be bolstering by their grants the mere nominal proprietors of vast tracts, which, like the dog in the manger, they would not or could not cultivate themselves, nor allow others to do so. Capt. Hamilton, in his statement of the 2nd of January, which had been quoted by the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer, said, that no other remedy for the evil in his district remained but to get a change of proprietors, and the substitution of men of energy and capital. Now, the duty of supporting the poor was the first claim upon the land, and the most effective and simple mode of getting rid of a useless proprietary, and thereby of benefiting the community at large, was to oust the present owners to satisfy the arrears of poor-rates. Last Session an Act had been passed to give the creditor who had the first charge the power of selling the property; and now he (Mr. Scrope) only asked them to apply the same principle in the case of arrears of poor-rates, so as to confer upon the British taxpayers advancing these grants as loans in aid of the Irish unions, the same right of sale, seeing the public became creditors in the first charge, by maintaining the poor, who ought to be supported from the land in their own districts. And this was in fact what the more deserving Irish landowners were beginning to ask for their own protection. Very recently the board of guardians of Ballinasloe held a meeting, and petitioned Parliament to allow defaulting lands to be sold to satisfy the arrears of rate. To this system he believed Parliament would be obliged to come at last, for no other remedy for the evil could be found. He (Mr. Scrope) should next proceed to say a few words on another subject. He proposed that the money should be expended, as far as was possible, in the productive employment of the ablebodied poor. If they adopted the productive system, they would get back the money they lent, and therefore he proposed to lend it; but whether they gave it or lent it, he asked them to look this question in the face, and see if it were not absolutely necessary they should employ the people whom they must feed in productive labour. There were twenty-one unions in a state of bankruptcy, one of which he would take as a specimen, namely, the Ballina union. It was anticipated that in the course of this summer there would be 4,300 ablebodied men in a state of destitution in that union. Their families, it was calculated, would amount to 14,000 more, making altogether 18,300 persons in that union, either ablebodied or depending upon ablebodied men for their support. The whole number of paupers, it was expected, would be 27,000, and, therefore, two-thirds of the paupers of Ballina union would be composed of the ablebodied class. He (Mr. Scrope) asked whether this ablebodied population should be maintained by them in such a way as would enable them to produce sufficient to pay them what they had advanced for their maintenance, or were they to be locked up in workhouses, employed only in breaking stones, and of no use to any person? He (Mr. Scrope) knew that the proceedings in Ireland in the year 1847 would be thrown in his face, and he would be asked if he proposed to repeat that system, and he would be also reminded of the national workshops in Paris; but he begged to call the recollection of hon. Members to this fact, that while the labourers on the useless relief works in Ireland were idling away their time and imposing upon the public—while jobbing in every possible way was carried on, and their money was misapplied—the productive works carried on in the same districts, under Mr. Labouchere's letter, were attended to, and the men employed upon them worked most willingly from morning till night. Amongst the men employed on the productive works there was no want of industry, and their conduct was most admirable, while on the unproductive works there was idleness and imposition. They should treat men as human beings, having a moral sense about them; and if the Irish had a moral sense about them— [*Cries of* "Hear!"] He did not mean to cast any reflection upon the Irish, but what he meant to do was, to allude to the reflections which were thrown upon them. It was stated that they were Celts, that they were an idle race, and that nothing could induce them to be industrious. He had refuted that assertion over and over again. And with regard to those very Mayo men, it was notorious throughout England that they were the persons who cut their harvest, and were most laborious. But there was another quality the Irishman had, and that was acuteness; and if they set an Irishman to a task of labour, and he knew that it was useless, and only imposed as a test, he would endeavour to evade it. On the other hand, if he had a piece of land to work on that would bring food to himself and his family, he would labour upon it from morning till night, because there was that moral sense about him that would induce him to do so. Therefore, the distinction between the relief works in 1847 and the works undertaken under Mr. Labouchere's letter was this—the one was productive, the other was notoriously useless and unserviceable—it was sham work, a mere pretence of work—it was made a matter of jobbing by the upper classes, and was a school for idleness amongst the poorer classes. If they could obtain productive works from their convicts, why not obtain it from their paupers? A noble Lord in another place had, on the preceding night, declared that the earnings of the convict at Gibraltar amounted to 38*l*., while the cost of his maintenance did not amount to more than one-half that sum. Were they, then, to put a man into a workhouse and maintain him there, and his family besides, in idleness; or would they put the ablebodied pauper to productive works—paying him by rations, if they chose? Let them look to what had been done by the Quakers in the county of Mayo. They took 500 or 600 acres of land, and employed some of the poor upon it, who would otherwise have gone into the workhouse; and he believed they had repaid themselves their expenditure. The waste lands were lying idle all around, the people were lying idle in the workhouse. Would they put the idle hands on the idle land, and let each man earn his maintenance in the way that Providence intended—by the sweat of his brow? Or, if they did not employ the paupers on the waste land, could they not employ them on arterial drainage? The Board of Works declared that such undertakings would be profitable; and why not employ the ablebodied paupers upon them if they did not approve of his other proposition? These works were at a standstill for want of funds, while they were voting 50,000*l*. for the maintenance of thousands upon thousands of idle labourers. He had one observation to make upon another point, the most important perhaps of all—the moral effect of maintaining them in idleness. How could they expect that men would ever be fitted for continuous industry if they fed them in this way? When they locked them up in workhouses, or set them to useless stonebreaking, they were teaching them habits of idleness, and inducing them to avoid labour. He asked the House, then, to put them to productive works, in order to teach them industry. It seemed to him to be essentially important that the two principles brought by him under the notice of the House should be considered by hon. Members, and not rejected in that hasty way in which opinions at first not palatable were dismissed.

SIR J. WALSH said, that the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Scrope) was gifted with an intellect totally impervious to the lessons of experience. For many years the hon. Member had been the untiring and not unsuccessful advocate of an Irish poor-law, and the result of that measure had been, that in two years one-fourth of the country was beggared, with a fair prospect that before two more years should have elapsed, the rest of it would be in the same pauperised condition. But the hon. Gentleman, with that obstinacy of delusion which characterised enthusiastic minds, could not perceive that the causes of those disasters were the realisation in part of his own wild schemes. The hon. Gentleman, with arguments of which, in many respects, he (Sir J. Walsh) would not question the validity, opposed the rate in aid. He admitted there was a great deal of force in those arguments, but was surprised to find how fluently these phrases, "self-reliance," "the stimulus of self-exertion," "self-dependence," &c., were uttered by him. Although those arguments of the hon. Gentleman had not perhaps been introduced with any strict regard to the subject before the House, he thought there was great and serious objection to the proposal of the rate in aid. [Mr. P. SCROPE: The noble Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord Dudley Stuart) has a Motion upon the Paper regarding the rate in aid.] He (Sir J. Walsh) was aware that it was a subject which had attracted a great deal of attention, and it was the right hon. Baronet, who held a sort of semi-official position, who first introduced it to the attention of the House. It was reported that lately the door of the Cabinet was a little ajar, and when, in the terms of the American song, it was asked, "Who's that knocking at the door?" the question was answered by the appearance of the head and shoulders of the right hon. Baronet the Member for Ripon (Sir J. Graham). The right hon. Baronet, however, either disliking the company or the place (perhaps, if he might offer a conjecture, having an objection to the company rather than to the place), like many people who knock at the door by mistake, begged pardon for having interrupted the company, and withdrew. This rate in aid, however, was a principle which the right hon. Baronet opposite would find most difficult and unjust in its application to Ireland, and doubly vicious in its present state. It appeared to him, that if they taxed Belfast and the thriving parts of the north of Ireland for the destitution of the south, the former might justly say, "We are part of a great united empire, the Union has been carried, and ought to be a reality." If you adhere to the principle of local funds providing for local destitution, it is one thing; but if you abandon and relinquish that principle, and call in extrinsic aid, then they will say, "We are part of a great united empire, and it becomes an imperial question, and not one solely affecting Ireland." Why should not the united kingdom bear the rate? Why should it not come out of the Imperial Exchequer?—for it is an imperial question. In fact, the schemes of the hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. P. Scrope) were nothing more nor less, if developed, than those of M. Proudhon—the abrogation of the right of private property. He would sell out the property of the landowner, in order to provide for the wants of the poor. And after the scheme of the hon. Gentleman was carried out, in what better position would the country be? How could the new landowner stand in a better position than the old one? There was still the same amount of destitution to be relieved—still the same liabilities on the soil. Hon. Gentlemen always talked of the interests of the public, and contended that individual interests should succumb to them, and they carried it almost as far as M. Proudhon or M. Louis Blanc. He would say with them, *Propriété c'est le vol.* This was the language of the clubs of France, but surely not of the English House of Commons. The hon. Member for Stroud resembled those legislators in another respect. He would have the Government employ the whole population. He would turn the Government into a great farming establishment, as if the British Government could engage with success in those multifarious operations, when the French Government had failed with reference to one tailor's shop. If the hon. Gentleman had looked at the papers which had lately been laid before Parliament, he would have perceived that his favourite theory had signally failed in two experiments lately made by the Government, one at King William's Town, the other at Bally Kilcline. He would not further notice the arguments of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stroud, but would pass on to the proposition before the House. He could not help regretting that an accident had prevented the discussion of the proposition of his hon. Friend the Member for Longford (Major Blackall), on the previous evening. That Motion was—

> "That the peculiar circumstances of Ireland, consequent upon four successive years of distress, require the immediate adoption of such measures as may assist and encourage the individual exertion of the owners and occupiers of Irish property, and promote industry, by giving remunerative employment; and that all grants or loans of money to particular districts should be applied, as far as possible, to such purposes as many conduce to the eventual improvement of those districts, and enable them to support themselves from their ordinary resources."

His (Sir J. Walsh's) great objection to the Government proposition of a grant of 50,000*l.* was, that it tended to continue the system indefinitely, and to widen the circle of destitution, and that there was no prospect, arising out of any Government proposal, by which, either collaterally or directly, the amount of pauperism would be gradually diminished. One argument there certainly was—an argument, too, which had been urged with irresistible force from the Treasury benches in favour of the present grant, and that was, that the refusal of it would cause the death of thousands; and that there was no alternative but actual starvation in the refusal of it. He knew that many hon. Friends near him, who felt that the Government proposition was, in the abstract, unwise, injudicious, mischievous, and fallacious, yet shrunk from the conclusion which must involve their fellow-creatures in destitution.

Mr. MACGREGOR here rose and addressed the Speaker, evidently under the impression that Sir John Walsh had concluded his speech, but seeing that the hon. Baronet remained standing, resumed his seat.

Sir J. WALSH said, he would not long detain the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Macgregor); but he was anxious, before he concluded, in an humble, though sincere manner, to suggest to the Government some other remedies, which he apprehended would be of a more beneficial nature than the proposal before them. For his own part, he preferred to see some scheme proposed by the Government which would be attended with lasting benefit, than those mere make-shift propositions. He trusted the House would excuse him for trespassing upon their time whilst he mentioned some of the conclusions practical experience had enabled him to arrive at; and he would premise the remarks he had to make by saying that the question of emigration had not, in his opinion, ever been fairly entertained by the House of Commons. Out of doors the opinion was fast gaining ground that emigration was, if not the sole, at least a most important remedy for the present calamitous condition of Ireland. That subject had never been introduced, except incidentally, and yet would it not strike the most superficial observer that 50,000*l.* would go very far towards relieving those miserable unions of a redundant population, whilst, if administered in the ordinary mode of relief, it would not last more than a few weeks? In the one case it would permanently relieve those unions of an amount of pauperism which they could not of themselves endure—it would dispense so far with the necessity of doling out those alms; whilst, upon the other hand, it would send that population to a country where its labour would be needful, and at once productive. The hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. Scrope) had said it was quite ridiculous to talk of emigration, because Ireland, was capable of maintaining its present population, or double that amount. His answer to that was, that Ireland could be only capable of doing so under very different circumstances. The proposition of the hon. Gentleman might be true, if there were manufactories established in Ireland, as there were in Manchester and Glasgow. It might be true, if the ports of Ireland were as crowded with ships as those of Liverpool or London. It might be true, if they could bestow upon Irish farmers the capital, intelligence, and industry of the Lothian farmers. With all these circumstances, with all these conditions, Ireland would no doubt be able to support a much larger population than at present. But the great fallacy of that line of argument was, that not only those indispensable conditions did not exist, but they could not be made to exist in Ireland—there was no probability of their existence in that country for a century at least. Emigration would be found an immediate as well as a permanent remedy *pro tanto.* It would prove a topical remedy for a topical inflammation. Perhaps he (Sir J. Walsh) might be permitted to trouble the House with a few practical details which came under his own personal observation. He could assure them that it was from no unworthy motives of personal vanity or ostentatious philanthropy that he addressed them. When he came of age, he became possessed of a considerable property in Ireland, which had ever since engaged his most serious attention. There was not a tenant upon his estates who was not personally known to him, and with whose circumstances he was not familiar. When first he became the owner, there was an immense number of middlemen upon this land, and they held upon leases for lives. By the gradual lapse of leases, three fourths of this property was now in his own hands, and he managed them himself. A great portion of his landed property was in the barony of Listowel; and he might with confidence venture to say that there were not above five persons on his property who were at present in the receipt of parochial relief, and yet he was rated at 9*s*. 6*d*. in the pound. He did not deny that he was personally interested in this question; but still he thought the House must see that there was some allowance to be made for the feelings of mortification which a landed proprietor must feel at seeing his property swept away from him by most pernicious legislation. The hon. Member for Stroud was not aware, nor were, perhaps, many other hon. Gentlemen, how difficult it was, and how long a time it required, to raise a prosperous, independent, and improving tenantry. It could not be done except by much attention, and by assisting those tenantry for years—by encouraging the deserving and industrious well-intentioned tenant, and by removing those who were lazy, unprincipled, and worthless. To raise such a class was the work of many years; but the landlord who found himself at their head might congratulate himself upon having fulfilled his duty, and conferred a lasting advantage upon the country. To a considerable extent he had realised the object of his ambition; and it had, therefore, been to him a great disappointment to find the tenantry ground down, and the stimulus taken away which was essential to the continuance of the improvement which had begun to manifest itself. He (Sir J. Walsh) wished now to refer to the subject of emigration, which was one of the deepest concern to Ireland at the present moment. His estates had never been so much oppressed with an overcrowded population, as was unfortunately the case in many parts of Ireland; he had always attempted to prevent, and it was no easy matter to do so, the subdivision of properties, and the creation of a numerous body of cotters; at the same time, when the failure of the potato crop came, there were many persons on his estates in extreme distress, and with very great difficulty he had succeeded in inducing the poorest to emigrate. In the years 1847 and 1848, he had induced between 100 and 200 individuals to emigrate from his estates; and he begged the House to recollect that that was at a time when the Colonial Office was assuring them that Canada was so crowded that it was impossible to introduce any more Irish there; that Canada was rising in revolt against any further emigration of Irishmen to her shores; and that Irishmen were dying of want in the streets of Montreal. At that time, when Government was throwing every discouragement in the way of emigration, he had sent out those individuals to Canada; and in every instance in which he had been able to trace their subsequent career, he had found them prosperous, contented, and happy. It was a striking fact, that out of a very considerable number of individuals whom he had sent to Canada, and who had no provision made for them there, except a little money to start with, every one had been successful; and, with the permission of the House, he would read one or two extracts from a great variety of letters which had been written by the emigrants, either to himself or his agent, or to their own relations in Ireland. [The hon. Member then read extracts from two letters, written from Canada, by a mother and son, who went out in 1847 and 1848, which stated that they were doing very prosperously, and that the son was in a good situation, getting ten dollars a month, with board, washing, and lodging.] He wished now to give to the House a short account of one farm of his, which was, he thought, illustrative of the condition of Ireland. The farm consisted of twenty-five Irish, or forty English acres; half of it was let to a man named M'Carthy for 10*l*. a year, and the other half to two brothers, named Shane, at 5*l*. a year. One of the brothers died, and the rest of the family then wished to divide the 5*l*. amongst them; he (Sir J. Walsh resisted that, and proposed to them emigration; they were reluctant to adopt that suggestion, but at last consented, and fifteen persons emigrated from that farm, at an expense to him (Sir J. Walsh) of 65*l*. Nor was that altogether a disinterested proceeding on his part, for he then let the whole farm to the remaining tenant, M'Carthy, who was a man of more substance than the others, and who was quite willing to give him an additional 4*l*. per year, so that both landlord and tenant were benefited; M'Carthy was now in possession of a farm of forty English acres; he had room enough to carry on improvements; and was in a condition to become a comfortable farmer; and he (Sir J. Walsh) had got, not only interest for the 65*l*. which the emigration had cost him, but one improving tenant instead of three miserable ones. Now the mischief of the purely voluntary system of emigration was this, that in that case, under that system, M'Carthy would have gone, and the bad tenants would have remained. That was his answer to the favourite argument of some hon. Gentlemen, that they ought not to interfere with the system that was going on—that if they wanted emigration the people were emigrating of their own accord. But what was the fate of the fifteen who had crossed the Atlantic? He would read the letter of John Shane to his uncle. [The hon. Member then read a letter, stating that all the family were employed and doing well, describing the nature of their occupations and the amount of their wages, detailing the cheapness of provisions, and expressing a hope that some of their Irish friends would follow them to that plentiful country where they could obtain the fruits of labour.] The hon. Baronet then proceeded to say, that with respect to the Committee appointed to inquire into the operation of the poor-law, their duties were of a most important nature; they would have to trace the consequence and effects of introducing a law for the relief of the ablebodied poor, in opposition to the opinions of so many hon. Members who were locally acquainted with the subject; those Irish Members who constituted the minority in that Committee were also invested with a charge of the greatest responsibility; and he hoped that they would not lose sight of the great points which it was necessary to contend for in that Committee. He would venture, in conclusion, to refer only to one or two of the delusions on this subject which were general amongst Englishmen, and which must be removed before they could approach the subject with any chance of arriving at a just conclusion. In the first place, it was important to trace the effect of the substitution of the system of ablebodied relief, which in 1848 supplanted the previous system, by which relief to the ablebodied was not allowed; and if they wished to know the effect of that change, they must closely watch its progress and development from union to union, in one electoral district after another. Another point requiring the greatest attention was the despotic and arbitrary power which was vested in the three Poor Law Commissioners—two of whom were Members of the Government, and therefore not a body standing aloof from party politics, but a body changing with every change of Government. It was a power, therefore, which enabled two Members of the Government of the day to tax the country, and sweep away all the landed property of Ireland. Another point on which England ought to have a clear opinion was, that this was not a mere landlord's question—there was always a cry against the Irish landlords; but he told the House again and again that this was not purely a landlord's question; it involved the property and happiness of the whole tenantry of that country; and there was no process of political alchemy by which they could separate the case of the landlord from that of the tenant. They could not, if they wished, as the hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. Scrope) did, ruin the landlords without also ruining the tenants. Another point should also be borne in mind—namely, that, in opposition to the opinion of the right hon. Baronet the Chancellor of the Exchequer, it would be proved by all the evidence before that Committee, and observed by every acute mind, that, under the operation of this poor-law, as it at present existed, the present state of that country was not a temporary or transient state; that the evils which they witnessed were inherent in the nature of the system itself, and would increase and not diminish. It would be made very plain to that Committee that Ireland could not pass from present acute suffering to some not very distant prosperity. He had heard it whispered by some that things were going on very well, that the present evils would cure themselves, and that the remedy, though it might be severe, would be effectual; and that, after passing through these violent struggles, Ireland would take a new start. But he said that that was altogether a mistake, and unless they applied some remedy to the poor-law as it existed, instead of the malady being local and temporary, it would be general and permanent. He was obliged to the House for the attention with which it had listened to him. He regretted that, under existing circumstances, he was compelled to continue his opposition to the Government on this subject, and to record his opinion against this vote. However forcible the appeals which were addressed to them by hon. Gentlemen opposite, a strong sense of duty compelled him (Sir J. Walsh) to say, that he could not consent to the grant of this money, not only because it would be utterly ineffectual to accomplish its object, but because it must necessarily produce the most mischievous consequences.

VISCOUNT DRUMLANRIG said, that he had attended all the debates which had taken place on this proposed grant, although he had not yet voted upon the question; and he could truly say that it was not without mature consideration of this most painful and difficult question that he had come to the conclusion that he could not give his support to Her Majesty's Government in granting the proposed 50,000*l.* Having come to such a determination he should be sorry to give his vote in silence. If the House would grant him its attention for only a few minutes, he would condense his observations, and would not trespass on the time that other Members, Irish Members especially, had so much greater a right to monopolise than he had. Of all the speeches he had heard, the speech of his right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Sir J. Graham) contained the most true, just, and statesmanlike exposition of those principles by which Ireland should be dealt with for the future, no matter of what party the Government might consist. He reiterated the declaration of his right hon. Friend, that the time was come when the Government must review the whole taxation of Ireland, and introduce large and comprehensive measures for its relief and amelioration. He did not underrate the difficulties Ministers had to contend with—they were enormous; but men who professed themselves competent to and confident in governing the country must not expect any quarter to be given them, or any excuse to be taken, who were not prepared with measures of an extraordinary nature in extraordinary times. Speaking as a more humble and less responsible Member, he would, at any rate, never grudge the time and the energy devoted by this House to Ireland; on the contrary, so intense did her present suffering appear to him—so appalling did the future threaten to be—that he could conceive no object more worthy of the united talent and energy of England than to devote every energy to that unhappy country. But how could his right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon say that this would be the last part of a series? Why, both the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Prime Minister had spoken on the question, and they had held out no guarantee, hardly any hope even, that it would be the last even during the present season. There was but one way to show England that this pernicious system would be abandoned, and that was by negativing this proposal at once. If they were determined that other means should be devised—he used no harsh terms; he did not say devised to make, but devised to enable, Ireland to support Irish distress—the course he advised was, if a severe one, at any rate the most merciful one in the end. He (Viscount Drumlanrig) had not said, and did not feel, anything like bitterness towards Ireland as a country, suffering as she was from an amount of woe and misery unknown before in any Christian country. Ireland, which had been cursed and tried in a way no country ever was cursed or tried before—cursed she had been often in her own representatives—men who, while they had bullied and blustered, or while they had swaggered and vituperated every measure proposed, no matter by what Government—men who, while they had begged from and fleeced the most credulous peasantry in the world—who, while they had traded in the misery and had trafficked in the credulity of their unfortunate fellow-countrymen, had never once, through a long series of years, suggested, nor had they even thought of, one sigle unselfish practical measure that could possibly be of use to their country. These were some of the entailed curses Ireland had long writhed under. Now, one word to the hon. Member for Meath (Mr. Grattan). What could they hope for Ireland from within, when they saw one of her own leaders, one bearing the name of Grattan, coming down to this House, in the present awful state of Ireland, and doing what? One night, the hon. Member, for the sake of raising a silly titter, moved for a return of the killed and wounded in the rebellion of last year; the next night he asked for a call of the House, when no such call could be granted, and, if it could have been, would have been of no use; and, on the third night, he turned the whole question of Irish distress into ridicule, by making a speech which excited all who heard it to laughter, not, however, on account of its wit. This was Irish leadership. He (Viscount Drumlanrig) could not look at the hon. Gentleman, and, recollecting his connexion with Ireland, listen to his speech without thinking of Nero fiddling when Rome was burning, and without exclaiming, "Alas! poor Ireland, may God help you in spite of yourself!" He would not detain the House any longer, but would conclude, only wishing to assure those Irish Members who really had Ireland and her sorrows at heart, that he did not vote against this question for the sake of getting rid of the Irish question, but because, so impressed was he with her dreadful state, that he thought the offer of 50,000*l.*, while it was unjust to England, was useless to Ireland, and that she required, and ought to receive, the whole talent, energy, and intellect of this country to save her.

Mr. MACGREGOR said, that he should follow the excellent advice and useful example given on a former occasion by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Ripon (Sir J. Graham), and be extremely brief in the observations which he had to address to the House. He felt great difficulty in coming to a decision favourable to this vote, when he took into consideration the fact that Ireland had neither a property nor a window tax, nor many of those assessed taxes and excise duties, which were paid in this country. He also recollected the large sums of money which this country had from time to time generously voted for the relief of the sister country. But, what was of more weight still with him, the consideration of the immense expenditure which the people of England and Scotland had to meet on account of the Irish destitution, particularly the city which he had the honour to represent, where the poor-rates were quadrupled by reason of the enormous influx of the Irish poor into it. With all these considerations crowding upon his mind, he confessed he found great difficulty in deciding to vote for this small grant of 50,000*l.* He, however, should vote for it from the conviction that this relief must be granted to the unions in Ireland, in order to protect life, and with the hope that it would be the last money that would be taken from the revenues levied in England and Scotland. He (Mr. Macgregor) trusted that Ministers would, in future, cause to be levied from the whole property in Ireland such a sufficient revenue as would effectually relieve the distress of Ireland. In respect to the subject of emigration, there was one kind that was no doubt exceedingly advantageous to Ireland, but there was another that was exceedingly injurious to the interests of this country and Scotland. He alluded to the voluntary emigration of old men, women, and children into the large towns of Scotland and England, to the serious expense of the ratepayers, and the great injury of their own population. He (Mr. Macgregor) trusted that the Government would carry out such other measures of improvement for Ireland as would go far to prevent the necessity of any further applications for grants of this description.

Mr. NAPIER said, there never was a time at which it was more incumbent on those intrusted with the interests of Ireland to consider the grave responsibility of their position. He wished that the Irish Members would submit their views on Ireland with candour and moderation; it would accomplish more real good than extravagance or abuse. For his own part, he felt it to be the duty of those who knew more of the real condition of Ireland, to endeavour to inform the English Members who might not have the same local knowledge; and he did not believe that a country which had been so nobly generous as England, would be wilfully unjust. He wished to submit as briefly as he could what he thought was an important principle which they ought to bear in mind when considering the present condition of Ireland. Its difficulties could not be any longer evaded, and they must look them straight in the face. The question, then, for them now to consider was this—were they for the future to allow Ireland to continue as a mere political convenience for England, or were they honestly to set about applying a remedy for those social evils? At the time of the Union, when England took Ireland into partnership, he (Mr. Napier) admitted that the latter was the weaker of the two. It was no doubt a noble policy towards Ireland that a great nation like England should take her by the hand, and give her the benefit of her great and glorious constitution. The obvious intentions of the Government of that day were, by a gradual process, to elevate Ireland morally and socially, and to place her upon an equality with England, which, he admitted, could not be done suddenly. Half a century had now gone by since that Union was effected, and since those professions were made; and what was the present condition of Ireland in connexion with the greatest country in the world? Its population was degraded, and its lands made desolate. Year after year was Ireland forced to come like a mendicant to beg assistance from the charity of England. Whatever may be the cause of all this, it was fitting that they should all join together in honest sincerity, to endeavour, by wise counsels, based upon experience, to apply a remedy to these evils. They should put aside all party differences, repudiate all class legislation, and endeavour, if they could, to find out what the causes of these evils were, with a view of removing them by a proper remedy. Now, at the time of the Union, he thought it was to be regretted that all the political and religious questions connected with the constitution had not been settled and determined. But let them come to the period of 1829, when the great unsettled question was at length disposed of. In that year, they had a great body of evidence on record relating to the condition of Ireland. They were thus informed of all its social maladies. They had evidence apprising them of the great fact, which was still intimately connected with the degraded condition of the country, that nearly one-fourth of the population was without any species of certain employment. And in 1829, when they settled that great question of Catholic emancipation, and when they had received an assurance from all parties that they were willing to co-operate for the interests of Ireland—when that famous manifesto of the Roman Catholic bishops was published, in which they declared that, inasmuch as all their civil liberties had been guaranteed, they were willing to co-operate with the Government in advancing the interests of Ireland—what remained for the Government and Parliament to do but to take the social evils of that unhappy country into their serious consideration, and to apply a remedy for the correction of them? They were now paying the penalty of their long neglected duty. Instead of taking the course which was so clearly pointed out to them, they made Ireland the battle-field of party. A system of policy was pursued fomenting discord and division; it curdled the charities of human hearts, wasted the energies and augmented the social miseries of the people. Let them, however, now learn wisdom from the experience of the past. In 1830, they appointed a Committee to inquire into the condition of Ireland, which set forth in their report the same evils that had existed since the Union. In 1833, another Committee was appointed, who reported the same story. In 1835, they had appointed another Committee, composed of such Members as these:—Thomas Spring Rice, Sir H. Hardinge, Lord Castlereagh, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. O'Connell, Mr. Sheil, and several of the old Irish Members. The report of that Committee commented upon the absence of that sound policy which should have propounded some measures that would have developed the wealth of Ireland, and improved the condition of her peasantry; and hence that fine country presented so much misery, discontent, and crime. Well, notwithstanding these repeated Committees, and these repeated remonstrances contained in the several reports presented to the House, nothing whatever was done in the way of carrying out these recommendations. There was a circumstance upon record which should not be lost sight of. They had a large encumbered proprietary in Ireland. In the last year they had no doubt passed a Bill to facilitate the sale of encumbered estates. But what was the fact? From the influence of the injurious policy, and the distress created, he believed that no estate had yet been sold under its provisions. When they spoke of the rental of Ireland, they should take into consideration the encumbrances which should be deducted from it. And they should observe that at this moment rents were not generally paid; and out of that portion which was paid, so much was obliged to be sent off to pay off encumbrances. There was no labour-fund in the country, nor capital. When they found that private capital was insufficient to furnish employment to the people, the Government should have proposed the formation of such public works as should have had the effect of facilitating private enterprise. That, however, was not done. They had in Ireland an incumbered proprietary, no labour-fund, poverty considerably increased, and the resources of the country diminished. There was another matter deserving of their serious attention. A considerable portion of the property of the country was under the control of the Court of Chancery. There was about 1,000,000*l.* of the rental of the country thus placed, so that the land thus situated could not be properly improved. It was not by one measure, even though it be called a comprehensive measure, but by a series of simple and practical measures, that these evils can be remedied. He did not intend to propose any new nostrum; he only asked them to retrace their steps, and to look at the evils that have been over and over again detailed in the reports of the several Committees that had been from time to time appointed. The people were unemployed, and, in consequence, were left to be the victims of disaffection and the dupes of false principles. They had another Committee in 1845, being the year before the famine. Like the former reports, they neglected the recommendations contained in this. The consequence was, that when the famine came, they were wholly unprepared to meet it. The Government had been addressed by the Devon Commission which reported in 1845. That Commission examined into the whole circumstances of the country from north to south, from east to west. The state of the whole country was laid before the Government in that report, which repeated the great crying evil, the state of the labouring population, and urged the necessity of adopting measures to give them employment. The report went further, and pointed out, under separate heads, the class of measures that they considered necessary. But the Government did nothing. He should not omit to mention the passing of the poor-law in 1838, because he found that the Marquess of Lansdowne, in the year after that measure had been passed, used these words :—

> "If ever a solemn pledge had been given by the Government during the passing of this poor-law, this was one—namely, that by every means in our power we will encourage the employment of the labouring poor of Ireland."

Well, then, the poor-law was passed with the assurance that there would be given the assistance of the Government in stimulating the industry of the Irish people. They had neglected to follow out the recommendations contained in the report of the Devon Commission; and what was the result? When the famine came upon Ireland, the country was wholly unprepared to meet it. They spoke of the state of the population: no doubt the whole country became more or less changed. From the middlemen class in Ireland down to the smallest occupiers, there was misery and destitution. The complication of tenures could not be well understood in England, nor the bad influences it was calculated to foster. It grew up much during the war prices; afterwards, the swarms of small occupiers had to be cleared away, for it was not practicable for landlords to improve the country without removing many of their pauper tenants. Of course, this must occasion for a time still greater misery. The way, however, to meet this measure was, by the adoption of an extensive system of emigration, and the carrying on of public works for the employment of the people. Whose fault was it that the Government did not keep the pledge that was given by Lord Lansdowne? When the famine came upon the people of Ireland it could not be supposed that the poor-law, which had only contracted originally to support 80,000 of the people, could supply the want caused by the loss of their usual food. Then, he was ready to admit, the generosity of the people of this country came to their succour—a generosity for which there was no parallel in history, it was so unbounded. He should, indeed, feel ashamed to stand up to address an English assembly if he did not freely admit that the generosity of the English people was at that time unbounded and unparalleled. There were three classes of persons in Ireland that now became subject to these rates — the proprietor, the tenant-farmer, and the clergy —no one of whom were responsible for the neglect of Government, the blight of agitation, or the policy of the Legislature. The very bounty bestowed on them did not benefit them; for though he admitted that the money which was given at that time to feed the country had been the means of preserving a great many lives, yet they all knew that it demoralised the people. They made useless roads—they cut up the face of the country, and made it much worse than it was before. The people were left in a much worse condition than they had been in before. Poverty had increased, and the resources of the country had diminished. The proprietors submitted to the poor-law under the pledge which had been given that employment would be extensively given to stimulate the industry of the people. The proprietors, however, were called on suddenly to bear the burden of the poor-law, which, even in ordinary times, should be accompanied with other measures calculated to give employment. Even in the reign of Elizabeth, when the English Poor Law was passed, an Act was also passed in the very same Session for the reclamation of thousands of acres in England; and Bacon remarks upon the fact, when he said that never within the same period was there such a quantity of ground reclaimed and rendered fruitful by manure and good husbandry. Now he admitted that even if the Government acted up to the pledge that had been given by the Marquess of Lansdowne, the country might survive; but let them observe the condition of the proprietors as well as that of the people generally. He did not want to screen bad landlords, or persons that failed to discharge their duties, remembering that all such persons had contributed more or less to bring about the present state of things. They had great difficulties to contend with, but difficulties will never be an answer to duty. Let them now put an end to these difficulties, if they could. Legislation could not do everything; but a Minister might do much. He admitted there was nothing more unwise towards Ireland than to hold out to her the prospect of removing all her evils by legislation—evils which no legislation of itself could remedy. He often remarked that this induced a class of persons to look forward for the most romantic benefits from legislation. In the face of all the evils which afflicted Ireland, there was not one measure of a statesmanlike character proposed to save the country. The noble Lord the late Member for Lynn (Lord G. Bentinck), who was now called to his last account, had certainly intended well towards Ireland. Though he (Mr. Napier) had not the honour of his acquaintance, yet he must do him the justice of saying, that he considered the two measures which he did advise had characterised him as an honest Englishman, sincerely anxious for the welfare and happiness of the people. The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland said, that the agricultural improvement of the country was the main thing to attend to. But that could not be effected without capital. Surely the noble Lord opposite (Lord J. Russell) could not suppose that the Franchise Bill which he brought forward would cure any of the great evils of Ireland. He begged of the House to meet the difficulties of Ireland fairly and honestly. The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland said, that the country wanted quiet and repose. He (Mr. Napier) had certainly supported, with all his heart, the Government in the measures they had brought forward to secure that peace and repose. Let them have some measures for promoting the employment of the people. Society in Ireland—some portions of it at least—must be reconstructed; and he firmly believed that there never was a nobler opportunity for doing so, and placing it upon a permanent and peaceful footing, than the present. It was frequently stated that Ireland was lightly taxed as compared with England, and that, therefore, she had no reason to complain of an extraordinary burden. Taxation was a small grievance with the people of that country. They had no objection to pay taxes so long as they had the means of paying them. It was said by Edmund Burke, with respect to the taxation of Ireland, that—

> "He hoped the unhappy phantom of equal taxation with England had vanished. He could only say that Ireland paid as many taxes as those who were the best judges of her power thought she could bear."

Let, then, Parliament examine into her real circumstances, and weigh them deliberately, and put upon her any burden which their consciences told them she could bear. Let them deal with her in a manner worthy of the great moral dignity of England, and save her from the degrading position to be always called a mendicant. Referring to the term mendicant, as applied to Ireland, the Marquess of Lansdowne said—

> "An opinion prevailed that whenever money was lent to Ireland it was never expected to be repaid—that, instead of its being a loan, it was, in point of fact, a gift. Such an opinion (the noble Marquess observed) was fallacious, because, if reference was made to the public works accounts, it would be found that two-thirds of the Exchequer-bills which were issued to assist the public works department, were in course of repayment; and if the remaining third was unpaid, it was because the works were suspended."

In the present peculiar circumstances of Ireland, every man who was desirous of doing his duty ought to be encouraged in the performance of that duty. It was of the greatest importance to protect those men, and to encourage them in the expenditure of capital for the improvement of Ireland. The Government and Parliament must adopt comprehensive measures in order that Ireland should go on in the progress of civilisation, side by side with England. Having expressed these opinions, he would conclude with the celebrated observations of the Roman orator:—

> "Erit igitur humanilatis vestræ, magnum civium numerum calamitate prohibere; sapientiæ videre multorum civium calamitatem a republica sejunctam esse non posse."

Mr. HORSMAN declared his intention of voting with Her Majesty's Ministers, and against the Amendment proposed by the hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. Scrope); but he gave that vote most reluctantly, and under the pressure of a necessity which he felt he could not resist, however much he disapproved of the principal part of their policy. The Amendment of the hon. Member for Stroud added a condition to the grant; but he could not lend himself to the delusion that any system of grants to Ireland could be otherwise than mischievous. He therefore could not vote for the Amendment. He felt tolerably certain that many Gentlemen who voted in the majority the other night must have laboured under great difficulty and embarrassment, since they must have been conscious that they were about to take a course very different from that which they had previously contemplated. But the truth was, that the appeal made to the House was not on the wisdom or policy of the grant, but as a question of humanity alone. If they considered the history of former grants of this kind, they must be fully alive to the results in destroying an independent feeling, in removing all feeling of self-reliance, in checking everything like a spirit of industry, and in short in demoralising the whole population of the country. The question was, whether they could apply several principles under the peculiar circumstances of this case. His hon. Friend (Mr. Scrope's) principle was, that there should be local responsibility for local wants; in other words, that the Irish people must pay their own rates, and that Irish property must support the Irish poor. That was the principle of the poor-law, and to carry out that principle it was extended to Ireland, but in the districts which this grant was intended to relieve, it had been a most disastrous failure. In enacting it, the Legislature proceeded on a false principle; for finding that it worked well in England, it was assumed that it would do so in Ireland, without regarding the essentially different circumstances of the two countries. In England poverty was the exception—in Ireland the large majority were in a state of pauperism. In England property, for the most part, was in the hands of wealthy proprietors; whereas in Ireland estates were encumbered to such an extent that the ownership was merely nominal. When the maintenance of the destitute poor in Ireland was thrown upon the classes above them, it led to an actual and great increase of destitution; for instead of the poor being relieved, it brought down all classes to that level. The papers which had recently been laid on the table showed that in one union in the west of Ireland last year, the poor-rates amounted to forty-one shillings in the pound; and in the Clifden union they were still heavier, for there any man might take possession of the property if he would pay the rates. He found a striking circumstance mentioned in a publication which he saw a few days ago, and which would afford a remarkable illustration of the destitution of the people. He found it stated that in a union in the south-west of Ireland the number of births in the quarter ending December 25, 1843, was 330; while the number in the quarter ending on the same day, 1848, was only 42. The whole property of Ireland had been confiscated to the maintenance of the poor of Ireland, and the result was, that it had left infinitely greater destitution than existed when it was brought into operation. But this state of pauperism had been still further increased and aggravated by famine, and the consequence was, almost general ruin, and that the rates broke down, whilst the physical prostration of the people was such as had scarcely ever been known in any civilised country. The burden of the rates, and the desolating pressure of the present system, had gone on until they had absorbed the landlords' rents, and the tenants' profits—the poor being in a state of as great destitution and famine as before; and the ultimate result was, that they had a ruined proprietary, a fugitive tenantry, a destitute people, and a desolate land. Their poor-law, then, had thus consummated what the dispensations of Providence had begun. Such being the case—and if he believed, as he must, that all the horrors of starvation were impending, and he was asked to agree to this vote as one means of preventing so terrible a calamity—he felt that he could not refuse it without repudiating the most blessed injunctions of the faith which he professed. Then, it had been asked, when this system of making general grants was to have an end? He had heard the noble Lord at the head of the Government asked the other night to pledge himself that this should be the last grant of the kind. The noble Lord most properly, as he (Mr. Horsman) thought, said that he would not do so. The proposition did not come forward voluntarily from him, but the noble Lord was bound to meet the pressure of appalling misery which presented itself. If it was his duty then to propose this grant—it would be equally his duty to make a similar proposal should the same circumstances again occur; and on the same ground he (Mr. Horsman) should be bound to support him again. Such a pledge, if it had been given, could have been to him no security against the repetition of a proposal of this nature; but he had a better security in the circumstances of this debate, and in the warning which it had given to the Government of the necessity of their applying themselves with that earnestness which had been urged upon them by the hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Napier) to the real difficulties of the task which was before them. The only weak part of the case of the Government was, not that they had proposed to the House, under a sense of duty, a vote in aid to prevent multitudes perishing from starvation, but that they did not accompany that application by other measures more statesmanlike in their character, and more beneficial in their results. The only thing that had been done was, resorting to that panacea for all deficiencies in legislation—a Committee of Inquiry—when indeed the time for action came, and we wanted men of capacity and earnestness to instruct, initiate, and guide us. The hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Napier) had practically stated what was wanted in Ireland. The defect of the operation of the poor-law there had been proved by dire experience. The principle that the burden of the poor should be thrown upon the land, had been refuted by experience, as regarded many districts in Ireland. It was very well to say that the landlords there had neglected their duty, and that they were not deserving of commiseration, and it was of little consequence if the landlords were destroyed. This might be very well for some persons; but not only the landlords had been destroyed, but that law had also destroyed the agriculture of the country. It had done so; and he would ask, whether the operation of the law did not throw the greatest impediment in the way of the revival of agriculture? As long as the law existed in its present form, the application of any sanitary principle was prevented. It was plain to every one, that to do anything for Ireland, it was, in the first place, essential that all their exertions should be exercised for the re-establishment of agricultural relations. This had been repeatedly said, but it would be found most difficult to do so under the operation of the present law. The whole order of things had been destroyed in Ireland, and it was now their duty to come forward and establish order by a new system of measures. There had hitherto been found three great impediments to the improvement of Ireland; the first was the insecurity of life, the second was the extent of local taxation, and the third was the difficulties which existed in the transfer of land. With regard to the first—the insecurity of life—that had been greatly remedied by the convictions which had taken place, and by the circumstances which caused them being at an end. The peasantry were no longer evicted from their potato gardens, and that terrible tribunal which adjudged men to assassination was broken up, by the persons disappearing from the country. From all that he had heard and read, he was confirmed in the belief that this great difficulty in the way of improvement was at an end. Then, as to the burden of local taxation, he (Mr. Horsman) would not go into that question, as a Committee was sitting respecting it; he would, therefore, merely say that he should be disappointed if the Committee did not find some remedy to that great evil by which the industrious and the idle poor were classed together. Constituted as the Committee was, he confessed that he did not expect to find a final remedy for the evil he alluded to in their report; but as they would have all the documentary evidence which was requisite for their inquiry, and as the remedial measures of the Government, which they had been told were in the course of preparation, would be laid before them, he should be mistaken if something beneficial was not done by the combined energy of the Government and the Committee. Then as to the difficulties which existed as to the transfer of landed property. If the poor-law was a failure, it must also be admitted that the Act of last Session to facilitate the sale of encumbered estates was also a failure. He did not know whether they should throw all the blame of this on the Encumbered Estates Act, for the circumstances of the country at the time were such, that if it had been the most perfect Act that had ever been framed, it could not have been brought into operation. In order that a measure of this kind might come into operation, there must be two parties—the one willing to sell, and the other willing to purchase. But when local taxation was so great a burden as it was at present in Ireland, no sane man would be willing to engage in such a hazardous enterprise as the purchase of an estate there. If they remedied the pressing burden of the rates, and proceeded to disentangle their system from those legal technicalities and trammels by which it was surrounded, and to cheapen the forms of process, it was not too much to say, that the third obstacle to agricultural improvement in Ireland might be removed. If those who had property were no longer terrified by the burden of the rates, and those disposed to purchase were not deterred from buying by the difficulties attending the transfer of property, he did think that they might make a healthy addition to the landlords of Ireland by the formation of small proprietors—and that many now in the class of tenant-farmers would ultimately become the owners of small landed estates. There were many persons, who were possessed of a moderate amount of capital, who would be willing to embark it in this way, and who might be assisted by small loans on the security of the property they purchased. If such an object could be effected, it would be attended with the most beneficial effects, as this was a class of persons much needed in Ireland. He believed that a great change had been effected in the social condition of Ireland, in relation to the enormous pauper population which existed there, and that change had been brought about by the appalling infliction to which they had been exposed. It had been said, that Ireland's calamity was England's opportunity; he believed that it might be made so. With the great extent of capital in England which was unemployed, and which was looking for a market, Ireland afforded more than the advantages of a new country; for roads were already made, and all the advantages of English law existed there; and it presented to men of enterprise and capital, inducements to settle which no other country exhibited. Looking, therefore, to Ireland not without hope, he consented to this present burden for the relief of the extreme of Irish destitution. He did so on the same principle that he gave aid to a dying pauper in the streets. He knew that the political economists, from Adam Smith to Mill, would tell him he was doing wrong; but he believed that in similar circumstances to the present, it was better to suspend the operation of even a good law at other times, than to adhere to the strict letter of it. Entertaining these views, then, he felt that he was called upon still to bear a little longer with Ireland's misery, and to grant her that which she required, even though, in granting this relief, he did so on no higher principle than that on which he would relieve a dying beggar in the street.

Mr. MONSELL felt bound to express his acknowledgments at the tone of the speech of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Horsman), and also his gratification at the attention which Her Majesty's Government had paid to the state of Ireland. With respect to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. Scrope), he thought that it might be disposed of as a mere question of words; for if it were carried, the hon. Member could not expect, from the destitution which prevailed in those districts which were to be relieved by this grant, that he should be ever able to get a return of the amount. He (Mr. Monsell) admitted that the system of grants was most vicious, both in England and Ireland, and they never should be resorted to, unless under circumstances of imperative necessity. He did not object to a poor-law, and he believed that the extension of the poor-law to Ireland had been most beneficial in that country, as it had established such relations between the richer and poorer classes as to compel the former to do their duty. But the system which the Government had carried out with regard to the aid afforded to the unions, and particularly in the west of Ireland, namely, the system of bolstering up the poor-law by public grants, involved the most vicious principle that could possibly have been established. He did not wish on that occasion to refer at any length to the very many remonstrances which had been addressed to the Government against the system they had pursued; but he might remind them that the hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume), had, in 1847—and in this he had acted with great consistency—remarked that he saw no symptom of any master mind in the Government on these questions of poor relief in Ireland, and urged upon them the necessity of introducing other measures in connexion with them. His noble Friend the Member for Falkirk (the Earl of Lincoln) had also warned them that some measure, auxiliary to the poor-law, must be brought forward. The system they were now going upon, must—and he did not care whether the money came from England or from Ireland—break down the country: their rate in aid must go on increasing, and they would, by continuing in their present system, be only staving off a little longer the time, which must ultimately arrive, when they would be compelled to grant the measures which they, the Irish representatives, had so often asked, and so often been denied. This would lead to no good end; for the result would be to drain the whole of the capital out of the country, and induce the Government to abstain from introducing necessary measures, without which the poor-law must be inoperative to a great extent. It had been stated that twenty-one unions were in that condition that they could not maintain their own poor. He (Mr. Monsell) knew if active steps were not taken, that twenty-one more unions would declare themselves in the same condition before the end of the year, and that House would be called upon to give rates in aid. Was there any doubt as to what was the great difficulty in Ireland? Was there any doubt as to the evils which had resulted from the disproportion of the population and the capital in that country? He (Mr. Monsell) had read in a paper yesterday that money could be borrowed in the City to any amount, at the rate of two per cent. Why did not this money go over to Ireland? It was because of the dread of the owners of it. He found fault with the House for this state of things, for the capital of England did not go to Ireland, in consequence of their not putting the latter country in a proper condition. The question then was, what was the relation between capital and labour in Ireland? Between these a proper relation must be established, and until that was done, the poor-law could never succeed, or the country improve, but things would get worse year after year, and it would be found impossible to resist the grants of large sums of money in support of the distressed unions. What he wanted them to do was to divert the money now spent in poor-rates to that purpose. He did not want grants; all he desired was that the Irish people should be allowed to raise money upon their own resources. That was the course essential to the prosperity of the country, and to accomplish that object he had no objection to a rate in aid, but he should always protest against a rate in aid or an income tax in Ireland, the object of which was to prop up a rotten and a vicious system which was destroying the resources of the country.

Mr. B. OSBORNE said, that, in the course of his excellent speech, the hon. and learned Member for Dublin (Mr. Napier) had forgotten to say which way he intended to vote, and, with that exception, it was a speech seldom equalled by any Member proceeding from the University of Dublin. He (Mr. Osborne) said that, because its tone was so essentially catholic and good, that, if he had any hope for Ireland, it would be derived from the fact of such a speech having been delivered by a Member for the University of Dublin. If, however, he might draw an inference, he should say that the hon. and learned Member intended to vote against the grant, because he had maintained that all previous grants to Ireland had been attended with unmitigated evil. The hon. Member had truly stated that, since 1810, there had been fourteen commissions to inquire into the state of Ireland, and not one remedial measure. When they heard such a state of things detailed, could the House be surprised that there should be a cry for the repeal of the Union, on the other side of the Channel? The House was now called upon to grant 50,000*l.*, and he should be compelled to give his vote against it; not for any reasons already urged against it—not from any skinflint penny wise and pound foolish economy—but because it was too small to be of any earthly use to the people it professed to relieve. Why, it would only last until next Saturday fortnight. Indeed, he only looked upon it as a miserable expedient to delay those long talked of remedial measures, of which Her Majesty's Government had been big since 1841, but with which they had never been confined to that day. These remedial measures were a sort of political Mrs. Harris, no man yet had ever seen them—they had never been brought forward, and were only to be heard of in the shape of the darkest possible allusions made in that House by Her Majesty's Government. The grant would be of no use to those whom it was intended to relieve; better that their protracted misery should be put an end to. ["Oh!"] Hon. Members might cry "Oh!" but he held that it was a spurious humanity; he, for one, would sooner be swept from the face of the earth than drag on from day to day by means of Parliamentary grants. It was only keeping body and soul together; the relief in the west of Ireland was not sufficient to keep men as men—it was just sufficient to debase them to the level of brutes. The hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. Horsman) had spoken in terms of great praise of giving the English Poor Law to Ireland; but in his (Mr. Osborne's) opinion, that was one great blunder from beginning to end—it was a curse to the country, and now we were reaping the fruits of bad legislation. In the southern and western districts of Ireland, the poor-law had been altogether a failure. No tinkering or botching of that law would render it able to meet the difficulties created by their bad legislation. Of the 131 unions of Ireland, 117 were in debt utterly beyond their means, and that, too, exclusively of loans from Government, and help from the British Association. They owed 252,000*l.*, having received, in addition, 241,000*l.*, and having had 200,000 children fed by the British

Association. He paused a moment to express his admiration of the British Association, and particularly as to their management of the funds at their disposal. They had distributed 600,000*l.*, and had only spent 5,000*l.* in doing so, or less than one per cent. What a contrast did this afford to the wasteful extravagance of the Government, who had given that sum to Sir Charles Trevelyan, and made him a K.C.B. into the bargain! But while thus extravagant of money and honours, they had done nothing for the real workers, Lord Robert Clinton, Mr. Higgins, and others—men who had deserved immortal honour. But to return to the failure of the poor-law. The system of elected guardians—the radical basis of the law—had broken down altogether—and in thirty-six unions paid guardians had been appointed. In another half year he believed a majority of the unions would be administered by paid guardians. Thus, instead of the infliction of the English Poor Law upon Ireland, being a subject for the boasting of hon. Members, they had bestowed a curse upon the country—given inadequate support to the poor—and shivered the fortunes of the few solvent proprietors left in Ireland. Did hon. Members really know what the facts of the case were? Let them compare Ireland with other countries. For every 100 cultivated acres, there were, in Belgium, 77 persons; in Ireland, 60; in England, 53; in Scotland, 51; and in France, 49. Thus, Ireland was second in density of population; and it must also be remembered, that while in that country two-thirds of the population were dependent upon the land, in Belgium and in England the greater proportion were dependent upon manufactures and commerce. That surely was a sufficient reason why that poor-law which had not worked so very admirably in England, should be a failure in Ireland. In the counties of Mayo there were 77, in Donegal 75, and in Kerry 70 persons to the square acre—and yet those were districts least calculated for the practice of agriculture. The first thing now to be done was, in his opinion, to reduce the area of taxation, which, as it at present stood, ruined the landlord, and was intolerable to the claimants for relief. In the report of the Boundary Commissioners he found it stated that the unions were so large that some of the paupers had to walk thirty miles to be relieved; and in one case a man actually walked 150 miles before he could get relief. In the hon. Member's (Mr. Monsell) own county, in the Newcastle union, a coroner's jury had found (the case was reported in that day's paper) that a pauper, named H. Keiley, had died from fatigue and inanition, the result of himself and his family having to walk 48 Irish miles, going and returning, for relief. This, then, was a system which, while it beggared the proprietor, did not assist the poor. But, with reference to the want of "comprehensive measures," of which they heard so much, hon. Members perhaps did not know how comprehensive those measures ought to be if they were to be of any service. Let hon. Gentlemen compare the following lists of rated value, and of the number of the inhabitants, and the relation the one bore to the other:—

	Rated value.	Population.
Kilrush	£59,228	82,353
Ballina	95,770	120,787
Castlebar	50,982	61,063
Westport	38,876	77,952
Swineford	45,966	73,529

There were many others almost as bad; and as long as the proportion was as he had stated, so long would the people be beggared and dependent, and so long would Her Majesty's Ministers have to come to that House for grants. What had become of the schemes of home colonisation, of which so much was heard when Her Majesty's Ministers were in opposition, and so little now they were in power? He had warned the noble Lord at the head of the Government that a system of outdoor relief would never answer, and he now repeated the warning. If it went on for six months longer, he could tell the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) that it would be impossible to save that wretched country, and the evils which now overrun the south and the west would extend to the north. The hon. Member quoted the opinion of Mr. Twistleton against outdoor relief, and proceeded to remark that the Marquess of Lansdowne, in the House of Lords, in 1846, had stated that he was opposed to a system of permanent outdoor relief, as it would lead to the complete confiscation of all the property in Ireland. The noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) had also said that—

> "He did not expect it would relieve the miseries of Ireland, but was afraid it would rather fix them; his hope was then in a grand and comprehensive scheme of home colonisation upon the waste lands."

That scheme was, then, to be carried into immediate operation, and he (Mr. Osborne) asked the noble Lord why he did not now propound these "comprehensive schemes?" It was all very well to come down and delegate the responsibility to a Committee. They had already referred the Army and Navy expenditure, the West Indian distress, and the Irish distress; and the only thing they had not got would be a Committee of public safety. He called on the Government to give up this shuffling, easy course of referring every thing to Committees, and to bring forward at once their plans, if they had any, of colonisation and emigration; and if they wished to reach the source of the evil, they must, in addition, assimilate real and personal property, and free the land from the feudal fetters with which it was encircled. [An Hon. Member: The Church.] No; he would not consent to mix up that question with the debate, after the good feeling evinced by the hon. Member for the University of Dublin in his speech. He (Mr. Osborne) did not see that the noble Lord, or his Colleagues, were prepared to do any thing of this sort. He called on the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) to propound those schemes of which he was so fond when out of office. He called upon him, in the name of the taxpayers of this country, and he called upon him in the name of the starving population of Ireland. It would not do to come down to the House night after night, and give a mere stop-gap of 50,000*l.* This money was of no use whatever, and he should give his vote against any thing of the sort. The noble Lord had said the other night, that he had great hope for Ireland, but that it was in a state of transition. So it had been from 1760 to the present day. But what did that mean—to what did it tend? Yes, it was in a state of transition; but under the noble Lord's Government it was going from bad to worse. There was one fact he wished further to state, in answer to those who were continually harping upon the money Ireland had had from the Imperial Exchequer. Did they know what England had had? England and Scotland had borrowed 18,000,000*l.*, of which only 6,000,000*l.* had been repaid: while Ireland had borrowed 9,000,000*l.*, of which 7,000,000*l.* had been repaid. He again called on the House to retrace its steps, or by its bad legislation Ireland would continue to fall from bad to worse, until, at length, it realised the description of the historian, and would be "a land with no arts, no letters, no society, and the life of man nasty, brutish, and short."

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER begged to recall the attention of the House to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. Scrope), from which, in the course of the debate, it had been diverted. As the hon. Member who last spoke (Mr. Osborne) had argued in favour of home colonisation and the cultivation of waste lands, it might have been inferred that he would have supported that Amendment. But with respect to that part of the Amendment of his hon. Friend (Mr. Scrope), he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) thought that if any thing at all had been learned from recent experience, it was the injurious results of employing large bodies of the people upon public works, managed by public officers. The results of employing the people upon the relief works had certainly had no tendency to convert him to the position of his hon. Friend. When hon. Gentlemen opposite said that nothing had been done towards the employment of the people of Ireland, they should remember that a million and a half of money had been appropriated for the purpose of enabling the proprietors of land to improve their estates—a manner of affording aid not open to the same objections which applied to the employment of the people on public works, but which tended to encourage the maintenance of that proper and wholesome relation between the landlord and the labourer which, ere long, he hoped, would be more firmly and generally established in Ireland. The Amendment of his hon. Friend, relating to the power of selling the lands for uncollected rates, had not been directly referred to, except by the hon. Member for Radnorshire (Sir J. Walsh). Something of a similar kind had been before proposed by a noble Lord at a meeting in Ireland. It certainly might be possible, when an arrear was due from a landlord, to sell his lands; but would it be advisable to incur, in all cases, the difficulty and expense of sales, in the face of all the objections to which the plan was open, for the sake of small and insignificant sums? If there were no other objection than this, it appeared to him sufficient to demonstrate the impracticability of that proposition. Any proposition of this nature, to be entertained by the House, under existing circumstances, must stand upon a totally different footing. It must be a general measure, and not one having a reference to so small a sum as 50,000*l.* But the argument of the hon. Baronet the Member for Radnorshire (Sir J. Walsh) was, of all that he had heard, the most extraordinary. The hon. Baronet said, it was not disputed that some assistance to the western unions of Ireland was necessary; but he was against taking that assistance from the Consolidated Fund; he was opposed to taking it from the taxpayers of this country; he was also against raising it by a rate in aid over all parts of Ireland; and, in fact, he was against attempting to obtain it in any other way than by taking it from local resources which were notoriously utterly inadequate for the purpose. If assistance was not to be taken from any of these extraneous sources, how were the lives of the people to be preserved? He (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) would not enter upon the question of the area of taxation, nor upon that of the amendment of the poor-law; but he would ask any hon. Member, whether he supposed that such unions as Ballina, Clifden, and Westport, by the minutest divisions of taxation, could be enabled to keep their poor alive? Under such circumstances, did his hon. Friend (Mr. Stafford), who urged these as remedies, believe that arguments of such a kind would relieve himself from the fearful responsibility of refusing the only means of preserving life to those poor persons? The hon. Gentleman the Member for the county of Limerick (Mr. Monsell) said, all that he looked for was an extensive emigration: he asked for no money; and what he proposed was, that they should be enabled to tax themselves in Ireland for that purpose. He (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) did not wish to enter into the question of emigration; but he doubted very much whether the local resources of the distressed unions would be in any way able to bear a tax for such a purpose.

Mr. MONSELL explained that he had referred to the resources of the whole of Ireland, and that he did not object to a rate in aid for the purpose of assisting emigration.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER, in continuation, said, the explanation of the hon. Gentleman did not in any way diminish the force of his argument. Did the hon. Gentleman believe it possible to raise, by a rate in aid throughout the whole of Ireland, a sufficient sum of money in time to relieve the destitute population of the western unions by means of emigration? Did he believe that, from any source whatever, except by means of such a proposal as that which Her Majesty's Government had made, it was, at present, possible to preserve life in the western districts of Ireland? Those who believed that, might with a safe conscience oppose the grant; but those who did not, were bound in common humanity to support it. The hon. Baronet the Member for Radnorshire said the proposition was an attempt to bolster up the poor-law. There was nothing extraordinary, he said, in the state of the western districts; they were the result of the ordinary operation of the poor-law. Of all the assertions made in the course of the debate, this was the most extraordinary. His (the Chancellor of the Exchequer's) own conviction was, that in the history of the whole civilised world, such a state of things had never before occurred as was now found in the western unions of Ireland. At no former time, and in no other place, had there existed such a disproportion between the quantity of food and the numbers of the population. He admitted that the measure was an extraordinary one; but the case was an exceptional case. It was not proposed to support the poor-law, nor, indeed, had the proposal any reference to it whatever except that the intended relief was to be administered through poor-law machinery. It was proposed, as he had said before, solely from a belief that it was the only means of supporting life in those districts. He could not complain of the hon. Member for Middlesex (Mr. Osborne) for opposing this vote. But on what grounds did he rest his opposition? Why, he distinctly said he was against any measure for preserving life in the distressed districts. Of what use, he asked, were grants for such a purpose? If the hon. Gentleman would read the papers presented to the House, he would find that last year the lives of no fewer than 200,000 persons in Ireland had been preserved by means of grants from that House. "Oh, but," said the hon. Gentleman, "it would have been much better for them if their protracted miseries had been put an end to at once; it would be much better that they should die upon the road-side and upon the hill-side, as many had last year." This, the hon. Gentleman said, was a statesmanlike view of the question! A good deal had been said about the statesmanlike and comprehensive view which the Government ought to take of the question, not by the hon. Gentleman, but by others; and the hon. Gentleman reproached the Government with not having so considered the subject. If this were a statesmanlike view, he thanked God Her Majesty's Government had not taken it. What were the reports received from the Clifden union last year, day after day? Let the House listen. "Several deaths have taken place upon the road-side from starvation;" "poverty, destitution, and crime are upon the increase;" "deaths from actual starvation are becoming numerous." What did Mr. Phelan, the medical inspector of the union, say? That gentleman gave the most horrible account it had been his fate to read of the extent of disease, dysentery, diarrhœa, and death, to which the people were exposed merely from want of food. Such was the state of things just one year ago; and how had it been arrested? By grants from the British Association, followed by grants from Parliament. Was the same frightful state of things to be repeated in 1849? If not, he called upon the House to adopt the same measures that had been found effectual last year, as the only possible means of averting similar calamities. He did not ask that the money should be expended on relief works, he only asked the House to adopt that system of relief which the experience of the past year had proved to be at once effectual and economical. The measures necessary for amending the law must be passed over till this was done, for it was impossible to bring any alteration into practice in time to avert the impending calamity. On these grounds he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) asked the House for this vote. He called on it to pass the vote as the sole means of averting a fearful calamity. And he asked them to administer it by means of the poor-law, which experience had proved most economical. He believed it would be a shame and a sin, to which no Christian legislature would expose itself, to condemn to death, as the hon. Member for Middlesex said, all these poor starving creatures, to leave them to die by the way and upon the hill-side. At all events the Government certainly would not take upon itself that awful responsibility. They had proposed this vote, believing that no other means could be devised for averting a tremendous calamity; and in proposing it, they had done their duty before God and before the world. If the British House of Commons chose to refuse it, the Government, at least, would have the consciousness of having done their duty to the best of their power; and not upon them would rest the responsibility, the fearful responsibility, of the fearful calamity which they believed would ensue.

MR. B. OSBORNE, in explanation, said the right hon. Gentleman (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) had taken advantage of a misapprehension, on his part, of what he (Mr. Obsorne) had said. He had not said, or intended to say, that he wished the people of these distressed unions to die; but that he thought it would be much better they should die to-day, than be reprieved till Saturday fortnight, which was the utmost time that the proposed grant would last.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER would be sorry to misrepresent the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Osborne), but he took down his words, and the hon. Gentleman said, "That the grants had been of no earthly use to the people, and that he would prefer that their protracted misery should be put an end to, and that they should be at once swept away, rather than be dependent upon Parliamentary grants."

MR. DISRAELI: I cannot regret, Sir, that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has recalled the attention of the House to the question immediately before it. The proposition of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stroud (Mr. Scrope) is, that if this advance be made, it should be made with security from Ireland, and not in the shape of a grant. I am opposed to the advance, whether as a grant or a loan; and, therefore, I shall vote against the Amendment of the hon. Member for Stroud. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, while he has complained of the question discussed the other night as to the necessity for this grant being again opened for discussion, has himself so fully entered into the expediency of the grant upon this occasion, that I am sure he will pardon me if I do not pass his observations altogether unnoticed. In questions of this kind the House should always make the distinction that inevitably occurs to one. There is a sentimental view of the question, and there is also a political one. If I make an appeal to any Member of this House, or to any man in this country, and tell him, if he does not consent to some general act and course of conduct, he must be responsible for the lives of thousands of his fellow-countrymen and subjects, there can be no doubt what would be the declaration that he would instantly make. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Cockermouth (Mr. Horsman), who has addressed us to-night with great ability, says he looks upon this as an appeal from a dying beggar in the streets. Sir, the argument of the hon. Gentleman is irresistible if the appeal be made to himself. I can easily conceive that a dying beggar in the streets might even induce the hon. Gentleman to pawn his coat to give him succour; but the appeal that is made to the hon. Gentleman, as representing the constituency of Cockermouth, assumes a totally different aspect. Why, Sir, every day we all of us have appeals made to us which it is difficult and most painful to resist. What enables us to resist them? It is the stern and practical conclusion that if we relieve all that apply to us, we shall soon be under the necessity ourselves of applying for relief to others. And so it is in the present case. We must not only consider the pressing exigency of those who are starving in Ireland, but we must consider whether we, as the representatives of the people of England, are not pursuing a course the effect of which may ultimately bring not only distress, but perhaps ruin, upon those whom we represent. Because, Sir, this is not a new appeal, or a particular occasion. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has just told us that this time last year—twelve months ago—if something like this had not been done, we have no conception of the scenes of suffering, of misery, and of death, that would have occurred. But the Ministry have allowed twelve months to go by after all that stern experience, and are yet not prepared on the present occasion with any measure—with any measure that will ensure us that twelve months hence the same appeal shall not be made to us. I am not ashamed to use the term "comprehensive measure." I caught the epithet from one who is second to no one in this House for administrative ability; and I shall not forget that the measure that has been suggested to the Government by so high an authority has been described as comprehensive. And, Sir, for one, measures less than comprehensive will not satisfy me. But if, for a moment leaving the sentimental view of the question, we look to the political one—if we feel it to be our duty on this occasion to endeavour to discover the cause of this almost unprecedented state of affairs, and to find out the remedy which it requires—it is possible we may be led to a conclusion very different from that which the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his impassioned harangue, has endeavoured to impress upon the House. An hon. Gentleman who spoke so ably a short time ago—I believe my hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Napier)—while reminding you of the ample information which this House has long possessed on the state of Ireland, and the frequent attempts that have been made to draw its attention to remedial measures for that condition, said, "Why, in 1835 you had a Committee of this House on the state of Ireland, you had measures of great importance recommended by that Committee—that Committee consisted of Irish Gentlemen of the highest character and position, and of all parties, besides English Members of great standing—and why were not those measures adopted?" Why, Sir, in 1835, Her Majesty's Ministers, then also the Ministers of the Crown, were pressing measures for Ireland of a very different tone, and very different character. I need not allude again to the Appropriation Clause. After the discussion the other night, that subject is perhaps exhausted; but the year to which the hon. and learned Gentleman alluded, happens to be the same in which that celebrated measure was brought forward. In 1835 and '36 you had a crusade raised against the House of Lords, because they were not doing justice to Ireland, and the repeal of the Union was recommended in consequence of their conduct. To-night I am told by the hon. Member for Middlesex (Mr. Osborne), that the neglect of the recommendation of those Parliamentary Committees, was in itself the best argument for the necessity of the repeal of the Union; and yet the persons who support the repeal of the Union are the very persons who then recommended a policy that is totally the reverse of what we now unite in recommending. Year after year you went on recommending mere political expedients for the state of Ireland. Year after year you were called upon by a powerful individual to do justice to Ireland—the definition of justice being the assimilating the institutions of the two countries. Well, the institutions of the two countries are assimilated, and you have got the poor-law, of which you now complain. Year after year the Government renewed its tenure of power by urging that cry, and every attempt to remedy the social and material evils of that country was decried and neglected, in pursuit of a policy of a totally different character. Even now, the very lees of that policy still appear in the introduction, at a moment of general suffering, of a new franchise for that country; as if it were possible to make factitious votes by Act of Parliament—as if it were possible to make a nation sensible of the dignity of possessing the elective franchise by a law. Why, Sir, a nation that is unable to appreciate the dignity and importance that attach to the possession of a vote, is unworthy of the franchise. Every one is now aware that Ireland wants much more than political privileges, and I think it shows a want of political tact on the part of the Government to introduce this measure at such a time. Well, at last the consequence of the course which you have pursued in Ireland—the consequence of explaining all the disorders of that country by political causes, has been recognised. That result has been aggravated and accelerated no doubt by the famine of which we have heard so much; but that famine could not have prevented, though it may have hastened, the final misery of the people. The system of political agitation by which you attempted to govern that country, in order to prop up a political party in England, has entirely failed. True, you may say that had it not been for the failure of the potato crop in more than one year, your system would not have failed; but I say that a system which taught the people to rely on other energies than their own—that taught them to believe there were extraordinary means for their support, and that the Government of this country, having to rely on the power of their leaders, must come forward to maintain them in moments of pressure—that system must have failed. And, therefore, it is in vain that you now come forward with mock reforms of idle franchises—it is in vain that you seek to convince the people of England that these are the means to secure the good government of Ireland. What is your next measure? Do you take a lesson from the dear experience of the past—and do you at last prepare to grapple with the great evil that you no longer can deny exists? That is not the course of Her Majesty's Government. The course of the Government is, to come forward and acknowledge the existence of these evils, and at the same time virtually to admit that they cannot remedy them, but to ask the people of England to supply some temporary or exceptional means by which they may bolster up a system which has already broken down under them. My first objection to this vote is, that it relieves the Government of this country from the responsibility that ought to devolve upon them; and this is not an occasion on which I am willing to give them any such relief. They had sufficient warning in the experience of the last three years. The very exception quoted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, of the state of these unions twelve months back, is in itself a proof that they ought to have been ready to meet Parliament with measures calculated to control these evils. I say it was the duty of the Government to have brought forward comprehensive measures. I use the felicitous epithet of the right hon. Member for Ripon (Sir J. Graham), I hope he will not desert it. I say that they ought to have introduced measures for reducing the area of taxation—for adjusting the arrears of rates—for dealing with the lands left in waste. These I would call statesmanlike and comprehensive measures; but what is the measure that we are offered instead of them? Is it an alternative that we ought to accept in lieu of the measures that the country expected? The hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Osborne) calculated that this vote can last only a fortnight. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Stroud (Mr. Scrope) has told the House, that no less a sum than half a million sterling will suffice, in the present year, in order to keep life among the starving peasantry of these unions. No Member of the Government has questioned his calculation; and it would be difficult for any Member of the Government to deny its correctness, since in the papers before the House we find that a still larger sum is necessary. The other night an hon. Friend of mine, with great ability, impressed on the House the necessity of an estimate being laid before us on this matter. My hon. Friend was hardly aware, and the Government appear not to be aware, that the fatal estimate has been already afforded to us. In these papers we are told that a sum of 592,000*l.* is the calculated expense of maintaining the population of the twenty-one suffering unions until the next season. Well, then, when a Minister comes forward, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer has to-night, and argues the whole case on the simple vote of 50,000*l.*, he is, in fact—unintentionally, of course, palming a delusion on the House. This discussion must commence again. In another fortnight another vote will be called for; and I want to know what your position at the end of the Session, and of the year, will be, with the continuance of such a state of things. Will the habit of self-reliance, which we all wish to impress upon the people of Ireland, have made any advance? Or can we flatter ourselves that when the House meets again this time next year, the first act of the Minister will not be another appeal to the pockets of our constituents, unless in the interim these comprehensive measures be introduced? And what chance have you of obtaining the introduction of these comprehensive measures, if you yield to the feeling which the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cockermouth (Mr. Horsman) has indulged in? If you acknowledge that Ireland is to be looked upon as a dying beggar in the street, and that you are prepared to keep her alive for a fortnight, what charity is that to the people of Ireland, or what justice is it to the people of England? We ought to take some moral from the past, and having entirely failed in governing Ireland by a system of organised political agitation, in alliance with a political party in England, we ought to come forward and tell the people of England that we are at last alive to our errors, and that we feel it is absolutely necessary that a new system should be established, and a new course of conduct pursued—that it is not enough to come forward and say, in the phrase of a loose rhetoric, that Ireland has unfortunately been the battle-field of party, but that we are resolved henceforth that these feuds should cease, and should be no longer fostered for the aggrandisement of a party in this country—that a moment when the spirit of the people is softened by affliction is, we think, a happy opportunity for reconstructing society in that country on a system very different from that which has been hitherto attempted. But I ask what chance is there of obtaining these results if you follow the policy that Her Majesty's Ministers now recommend to you—a policy which they describe as exceptional, and which they offer to us at a time when we want a policy that would be systematical and permanent? If there ever were an occasion when the men who rule a great country, who guide public opinion, who instruct the public mind, should lay down a broad basis for a great national policy, this is the occasion. I protest, then, against the whole spirit of the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. When the right hon. Gentleman thought that he was indulging in an impassioned appeal to our feelings, I say there was something unstatesmanlike and little in that appeal. An embarrassed poor-law guardian might be excused for coming forward and indulging in such language; but after the frequent Cabinet Councils held in the autumn, I ventured to hope that the state of Ireland had been well considered; and when we heard so much of our good fortune in the possession of a Lord Lieutenant so remarkable for his talents and experience, I thought that, at least, his counsels might have reached Downing-street, and that we should have laid upon the table, at the opening of the Session, measures—a series of measures—for Ireland, which would not have left her any longer the shame of Europe and the embarrassment of England. I hope, Sir, that the House, notwithstanding all that has been said—all that has been urged by the Government—will pause before they ratify this vote. The noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) called it, the other night, an extraordinary measure—but, Sir, I object to it, that it is not an extraordinary measure. It is an ordinary measure—a vulgar measure; it is the last mean expedient of a Government who know not how to cope with the difficulties they are obliged to encounter. The noble Lord told us that it was an extraordinary measure; and he said, when a man's house was on fire, you must have recourse to extraordinary measures to meet the calamity. Sir, I deny it. You don't have recourse to extraordinary measures when your house is on fire: you adopt ordinary measures—you send for the parish engine. You don't refer the case to a Committee of Inquiry. The noble Lord's house is on fire, and he asks for a Committee. It is very well to talk of Ministerial responsibility. What I want to impress upon the House of Commons is, that they also have a great responsibility in this matter. There are questions—there have been cases, such as the repeal of the corn laws, the repeal of the Roman Catholic disabilities, where Members may have given a vote, the wisdom of which they might have suspected. But hon. Members felt that responsibility on such questions was light—that a great many years must elapse before they could be called upon to give an account of their votes. They might have ceased to be Members of the House before the fruitlessness of the scheme or the failure of the measure could be laid to their account. But let not hon. Members lay this flattering unction to their souls in the present instance. In a very few days—in a very few weeks at most—you will have a fresh appeal made to Parliament. In the present instance your constituents may allow it to pass over in silence—they may think it is merely a vote of 50,000*l.* to save 200,000 persons from starvation. That consideration may influence them, as it does the hon. Member for Cockermouth (Mr. Horsman). But when they see that they have saved the lives of those 200,000 people only for a fortnight—that in a fortnight or a month's time a fresh appeal is to be made to their feelings or their pockets—when they find that by this system they are only getting deeper and deeper into the mire; and that after spending half a million of money they will be obliged to face the difficulties they are now only postponing, surely there is no hon. Member in the House who regards the favour of his constituents who will venture to give a vote, when his only excuse for that vote is his sympathy with the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I hope you will pause before you sanction this vote. I am glad it has not been allowed to pass over in a cursory manner. The question is before the country. It is a vital one. The whole question of Ireland is bound up in this vote, however slight it appears. And unless the Members of this House, supported by their constituents, make a stand upon this occasion, I see nothing but a future of aggravated suffering for Ireland, and of impending distress even for England herself.

Mr. RICE said, that the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. Disraeli) had called the attention of the House to the views of the question which he had laid before it; but he (Mr. Rice) hoped they would not confine themselves to that view of the subject. He wished to call things by their right names. He thought that there was a strong feeling in this country against those votes for Irish distress. But if there were one thing more than another connected with them to which he should object, it was their calling them loans and not grants, when there was no possible chance of their ever being repaid. But as to the light in which the question should be viewed, he preferred taking the view of the hon. Member for Cockermouth (Mr. Horsman) to that of the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire (Mr. Disraeli). He (Mr. Rice) believed it was the hon. Member for Northamptonshire (Mr. Stafford) who had said that this was only one of a series of similar measures. If it were indeed one of a series, he (Mr. Rice) hoped it was the last. But for the reasons stated by the hon. Member for Cockermouth and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he should vote for it.

Lord C. HAMILTON said, that the Irish Poor Law system had been attacked by several hon. Members during the debate. His reason for not answering those attacks was, that he considered the entire question of the poor-law utterly irrelevant to the subject under discussion. He was one of the very few Irish Gentlemen who was prepared to defend that law, and when the proper time came he would be prepared to do so; but at present it was quite irrelevant, and he therefore should not reply to the attacks that had been made upon it. But upon some of the observations of the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire (Mr. Disraeli), he could not help making some remarks. That hon. Gentleman could not touch upon any subject without embellishing it. His powers of eloquence and his transcendent ability prevented him from touching any subject without, at the same time, adorning it. But he had said, in commenting upon the observations of the noble Lord opposite (Lord J. Russell), that when a man's house was on fire he sent for the parish engine. He (Lord C. Hamilton) could not but admire the coolness of the hon. Member, in thinking of nothing but the parish engine —in sitting down coolly and sending for it. Such perfect coolness and self-possession forcibly reminded him of the Roman senators, who, when the forum was broken into by the Gauls, sat quite unmoved. Such self-possession might have been the habit of ancient Rome. But he should acknowledge that, speaking practically, when a house was on fire in the modern city of London, they usually sent in haste for the fire-escape, which was a sort of machine that you went down head foremost in from the fourth story. He looked upon the vote of 50,000*l.* as a fire-escape—as an exceptional measure, and solely as an exceptional measure, rendered necessary by circumstances as amazing as a house on fire; and for that reason he was prepared to vote for it, and not because he agreed with the arguments urged in its favour.

Mr. MOORE could not avoid commenting upon the expression of the hon. Member for Middlesex, that it would be better for those poor starving creatures to be allowed to die, than to have life kept in them by this grant. [Mr. Osborne: I said than to have life kept in them for only a fortnight.] Very well, only for a fortnight. This might be the hon. Gentleman's opinion after he had dined; but if the hon. Gentleman was placed in the same position as those unfortunate persons, he (Mr. Moore) knew nothing which could induce him to suppose that his views on that subject would not be very considerably modified. The hon. Gentleman had said that it was better for a man to die of starvation than be supported from day to day by the charity of others; but let it be remembered that in the union workhouses in England thousands of persons were supported in the same way. The question at issue was whether those persons should be permitted to die of famine—whether it would be creditable for Parliament, as the representative of a great civilised country, to allow thousands of fellow-subjects to suffer the horrors of starvation? The hon. Gentleman the Member for Buckinghamshire (Mr. Disraeli) had adopted another view of the case, and had made it a party question. It was not a consideration with him whether 100,000 Irishmen should die or live, but whether the Government was in any way implicated in their deaths. But surely the hon. Gentleman did not wish the House to suppose that any protestation on the part of the Government would have induced him to vote money which was not required by the exigency of the case? If the money were really demanded by the exigency of the State, was the hon. Gentleman prepared not to grant it, merely because in his opinion the general policy pursued by the Government was not correct? He (Mr. Moore) was prepared to vote for the grant, and he regretted that the hon. Member (Mr. Disraeli) who had spoken so lately appeared more desirous to strike a blow at the Government, than to yield to the necessities of the case.

Mr. W. P. WOOD could not avoid making some brief remarks upon the subject, after having heard the observations made by the hon. Member for Cockermouth (Mr. Horsman), and the hon. Gentleman who had spoken last (Mr. Moore). The vote which he (Mr. Wood) had felt it his painful duty to give the other night upon this question had been given for the purpose of saving the people from starvation, for he considered that the vote now asked for, small as it was, might be of fatal consequences to Ireland. How did England and Scotland obtain their social position? Was it by grants of public money advanced for the purpose of supporting the nation from time to time, or was it by honest and strenuous industry? There were instances of unions in Ireland which had nobly performed their duty, and where the landlords had strained every nerve to give employment to their poor. Once give this grant, and you take away every incentive to industry in the poor; you break down the energies of the landlords who were endeavouring to perform their duty, and, instead of 200,000 persons, you would have in a few weeks 400,000 suffering the horrors of starvation. The only possible means of avoiding that calamity was by stimulating the efforts of those who were laudably endeavouring to remove it, by telling them they had nothing to expect from the public Exchequer. As to extreme cases, no one could think so meanly of the charity of England as to suppose that relief would not be afforded; there had never been any difficulty in providing for them, but the difficulty had been in persuading this country to afford relief to the ablebodied poor. He (Mr. Wood) could not conclude without a word of reference to the report of Captain Hamilton, which had been laid on the table for the purpose of inducing them to concur in this grant; but he confessed it had made the strongest possible impression on him in the contrary direction. That officer stated that there would be in the union of Ballina 27,000 persons destitute before harvest; of these 4,300 were ablebodied, and 14,000 dependent on them; so that 18,300 could be supported by labour; but he added that the ablebodied poor were lazily inclined, and would do nothing for themselves as long as anything should be done for them. Captain Hamilton further stated, that if the landlords were able and willing to give employment, and the poor willing to work, there was sufficient labour to be performed in that very district to take up the whole of the ablebodied poor and afford them employment. The Inspector said, indeed, that some of the landlords were not able, but also that there were others who were able, and were looking forward to a rate. Were they then to make a grant of 50,000*l*., and thereby diminish the energies of the landlords throughout the unions which were in a better condition, as well as in those which were suffering from destitution, and of the labourers also? If he were an Irishman he should be disposed to say to the Government, "We are now, for the very first time in our history, doing our best ably and strenuously to support ourselves; do not destroy all the springs of action, but leave us at once to do our best, and make our most earnest efforts to secure our own subsistence." The system of grants had been the bane and curse of Ireland. He would remind the House that, in the last century, one of the most able, pious, and learned men whom Ireland had produced, Bishop Berkeley, published a series of queries on the subject of the condition of Ireland, and that amongst them were the following—"When shall we in Ireland be able to maintain ourselves by our own industry? To whom does the fable of Hercules and the carter apply so strongly as to this nation of Ireland? Whose fault is it, then, if the poor of Ireland remain poor?"

COLONEL DUNNE strongly deprecated such remarks as fell from the hon. Member for Cockermouth (Mr. Horsman), that he would give this grant as he would alms to a beggar in the street. He contended that it was a case of absolute necessity to provide for the support of many districts in Ireland, such as those to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer referred in his speech. The people must die if you did not; there was no alternative. There were unions in which a rate of 6*s.* 8*d.* would be required for the support of the poor, yet in which, if you took not the valuation, but the natural produce of last year, it would not go beyond 3*s.* 4*d.* The whole question was, should the means come from the Imperial Treasury, or from Ireland alone? Suppose a rate were to be levied on Ireland solely to support the south-west of Ireland, or on England solely to support the west of England, that would be an arrangement in which there would be little sense or justice. What was Ireland, and what was England? Were they one country? The moment you went beyond the radius of the property with which you were connected, you opened the whole question—was the union, the province, the country, to be rated, or was the empire? Let it be recollected that England had taken away from Ireland her distinct government; that, only two years ago, she passed a law by which the exports from Ireland to England had diminished one-third; that she had imposed on Ireland a poor-law unsuited to the country, and last year refused an inquiry into it.

COLONEL SIBTHORP said, there was a saying that "old birds were not to be caught by chaff." If he understood his hon. Friend the Member for Buckinghamshire (Mr. Disraeli) rightly, he meant to vote against the Amendment of the hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. Scrope), and that, therefore, he would vote with the Government. On no occasion could he (Colonel Sibthorp) do so—on no occasion could he go with them. He could not go with the Government—he could not vote with the hon. Member for Stroud; therefore, he should not vote at all against the main question. He was in this difficulty, that he did not wish to be caught in a trap, in voting with the Government, with whom, as he said before, he would not go on any point.

MR. SPEAKER said, the hon. and gallant Member (Col. Sibthorp) would have the opportunity of voting against the grant after the Amendment proposed by the hon. Member for Stroud should be disposed of.

MR. HUME said, what he wanted to know was this—what is the want of Ireland? The want of Ireland is employment. But would this grant give employment? Clearly not. The hon. and gallant Member for Portarlington (Col. Dunne) said the question was one of life and death. Now, admitting that to be the case, what would be the result of the present grant? Why, that it would afford relief for a fortnight. At the end of that time what was to be done to stimulate the industry of Ireland? He believed the present vote would add to the evil, and increase the dependence of the people on grants of money. No man who wished well to Ireland would support this grant.

LORD J. RUSSELL said, the hon. and learned Member for Oxford (Mr. W. P. Wood), in objecting to this grant, had placed his vote very much on the ground of the report of Captain Hamilton, inspector at Ballina. The hon. Member who had just spoken (Mr. Hume) likewise objected to it, because he thought employment ought to be given, and refusing this vote would tend to increase employment. Now, he would tell the House what Captain Hamilton said. He stated, in the first place, that the landlords were generally unable to give employment; and in another part, he added, that the labourers were so weak they were hardly able to work, and then put it to the Commissioners whether he should now accede to the striking of another rate. He said—

> "The striking of another rate will have the effect of extinguishing the little hope still to be found in the union; the few landlords who are giving employment will come to a stand-still; a rate can only be collected by tedious legal proceedings, and by the time it will become available, the poor will have ceased to exist."

Now, the hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume) thought the refusing this grant would favour employment, and enable the people to live; so that he would see that the authority of Captain Hamilton, at least, was against him.

Mr. J. O'CONNELL had never heard so much said upon a question bearing so little upon the real question. If they did not do something to assist the people, the leaving them to starve would be little short of murder.

Mr. P. SCROPE, seeing the temper of the House, would not trouble it to divide upon his Amentment.

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Question put, and negatived.

Lord D. STUART said, that he had an Amendment to propose of which he had given notice, but he could hardly expect that he would be allowed to proceed with it at that late hour of the night, it being then half-past twelve. ["Go on, go on!"] He did not think that he could consistently proceed with his Amendment at that time, though he was prepared to go on if it was the pleasure of the House.

Lord J. RUSSELL said, that the proposition which the noble Lord (Lord D. Stuart) was about to bring forward was, that the money to be advanced to the unions of Ireland should be repaid by all but those who received it. He did not think that this was a question with which the noble Lord would detain the House at any length, and he believed that the House would be enabled to bear the fatigue of hearing him, even if an adjournment should be found necessary afterwards.

Sir H. W. BARRON said, as many hon. Members were desirous of expressing their opinions, he thought it would be better to adjourn the debate.

Mr. ROCHE said, he was anxious to express his opinion, but he could not forget that in the meantime the people of Ireland were starving.

Sir H. W. BARRON then moved the adjournment of the debate.

Lord D. STUART seconded the Motion.

Motion made and Question put, "That the debate be now adjourned."

The House divided:—Ayes 9; Noes 174: Majority 165.

List of the Ayes.

Bankes, G.
Floyer, J.
Hodgson, W. N.
Mandeville, Visct.
Pigott, F.
Sibthorp, Col.
Spooner, R.
Tancred, H. W.
Waddington, D.

TELLERS.

Barron, Sir H. W.
Stuart, Lord D.

List of the Noes.

Abdy, T. N.
Adair, R. A. S.
Adderley, C. B.
Aglionby, H. A.
Anson, hon. Col.
Anstey, T. C.
Archdall, Capt. M.
Armstrong, R. B.
Arundel and Surrey, Earl of
Bagshaw, J.
Baines, M. T.
Baring, rt. hon. Sir F. T.
Bellew, R. M.
Berkeley, hon. Capt.
Bernard, Visct.
Birch, Sir T. B.
Blackall, S. W.
Blair, S.
Bourke, R. S.
Bouverie, hon. E. P.
Boyle, hon. Col.
Brackley, Visct.
Brockman, E. D.
Brooke, Lord
Brotherton, J.
Butler, P. S.
Buxton, Sir E. N.
Callaghan, D.
Carter, J. B.
Cavendish, hon. C. C.
Cavendish, W. G.
Clements, hon. C. S.
Cobbold, J. C.
Cochrane, A. D. R. W. B.
Coles, H. B.
Cowan, C.
Craig, W. G.
Crowder, R. B.
Devereux, J. T.
Disraeli, B.
Dodd, G.
Douglas, Sir C. E.
Drumlanrig, Visct.
Duncan, G.
Duncuft, J.
Dundas, Adm.
Dundas, G.
Dunne, F. P.
East, Sir J. B.
Ebrington, Visct.
Elliot, hon. J. E.
Evans, W.
Farrer, J.
Ferguson, Sir R. A.
Filmer, Sir E.
Fitzpatrick, rt. hon. J. W.
Fitzwilliam, hon. G. W.
Foley, J. H. H.
Fordyce, A. D.
Forster, M.
Fox, R. M.
Glyn, G. C.
Greene, J.
Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.
Grey, R. W.
Gwyn, H.
Hamilton, Lord C.
Hardcastle, J. A.
Hastie, A.
Hastie, A.
Hawes, B.
Hay, Lord J.
Hayter, rt. hon. W. G.
Henley, J. W.
Henry, A.
Herbert, H. A.
Hobhouse, rt. hon. Sir J.
Hobhouse, T. B.
Hood, Sir A.
Hornby, J.
Horsman, E.
Howard, Lord E.
Howard, hon. C. W. G.
Hume, J.
Jervis, Sir J.
Keppel, hon. G. T.
Labouchere, rt. hon. H.
Lascelles, hon. W. S.
Lewis, G. C.
Macnaghten, Sir E.
Macnamara, Maj.
M'Cullagh, W. T.
M'Gregor, J.
Mahon, The O'Gorman
Maitland, T.
Matheson, A.
Matheson, Col.
Maule, rt. hon. F.
Maxwell, hon. J. P.
Milner, W. M. E.
Monsell, W.
Moore, G. H.
Morgan, H. K. G.

Morris, D.
Mulgrave, Earl of
Mullings, J. R.
Muntz, G. F.
Mure, Col.
Napier, J.
Norreys, Sir D. J.
Nugent, Sir P.
O'Brien, J.
O'Brien, T.
O'Connell, J.
O'Connell, M. J.
O'Flaherty, A.
Ogle, S. C. H.
Osborne, R.
Paget, Lord A.
Paget, Lord C.
Paget, Lord G.
Palmerston, Visct.
Parker, J.
Pechell, Capt.
Peto, S. M.
Pilkington, J.
Raphael, A.
Rawdon, Col.
Reynolds, J.
Rice, E. R.
Rich, H.
Robartes, T. J. A.
Roche, E. B.
Romilly, Sir J.
Russell, Lord J.
Russell, F. C. H.
Sandars, J.
Scholefield, W.
Scrope, G. P.
Scully, F.
Seymour, H. K.
Shafto, R. D.
Sheil, rt. hon. R. L.
Shelburne, Earl of
Simeon, J.
Smith, M. T.
Somerville, rt. hon. Sir W.
Spearman, H. J.
Stanton, W. H.
Strickland, Sir G.
Sullivan, M.
Talfourd, Serj.
Tenison, E. K.
Thicknesse, R. A.
Thompson, Col.
Thornely, T.
Towneley, J.
Townshend, Capt.
Trelawny, J. S.
Vane, Lord H.
Villiers, hon. C.
Walsh, Sir J. B.
Ward, H. G.
Watkins, Col. L.
Wawn, J. T.
Westhead, J. P.
Willyams, H.
Williamson, Sir H.
Willoughby, Sir H.
Wilson, J.
Wilson, M.
Wodehouse, E.
Wood, rt. hon. Sir C.
Wood, W. P.

TELLERS.

Tufnell, H.
Hill, Lord M.

LORD D. STUART said, that the House having decided by so large a majority that the debate should be continued, he bowed to that decision, and would proceed with the Motion of which he had given notice. Although he felt it impossible for him to refuse voting for the grant, seeing that the question was neither more nor less than one of life or death with regard to many of their fellow-subjects in Ireland, he confessed it was with pain he made up his mind to do so. But extraerdinary occasions required exceptional treatment. Assuming, therefore, that the grant was necessary, the question arose from what source ought it to come? He had voted that it should come from imperial sources in the first instance. That was the course that humanity dictated, but he considered that there was a mode of reconciling humanity with justice—a course by which the money of the people of this country might be returned to them. The mode proposed by the hon. Member for Stroud seemed to him to be illusory. His own he considered to be quite practicable. It would be in vain to look to the unfortunate unions for the money advanced. But that was not the case with Ireland at large. The rate for the whole of Ireland was not more than 2*s.* 9½*d.* in the pound, and a very small addition to that would bring back the amount of the grant. When it was considered that 10,000,000*l.* had been already voted for Ireland, that she was exempt from a great portion of the heavy taxation of this country, and that the poor-rates of England were raised in consequence of the large influx of Irish paupers, he did not think it was too much to ask the people of Ireland to take upon them this burden. He (Lord D. Stuart) was the more disposed to assist the people of Ireland, because they had been misgoverned for centuries. He admitted that public feeling in this country was opposed to the making grants to Ireland. England was exasperated, and justly so, at the manner in which our assistance had been received. Such language as "take back your dirty money," could not fail to sink deeply into the hearts of the people of this country. He did not make his proposal for the purpose of relieving the Irish landlords from the performance of their just duties; and no doubt Ireland, taken as a whole, could repay our advances. A remarkable circular had recently been issued by the Archbishop of Tuam to the people of Ireland, in which he called upon them in the midst of their distress to subscribe money—for what did the House suppose? Why, to relieve the Pope from his present pecuniary difficulties. Now, he thought it might be all very right for Irishmen so to act, but then England ought not to be made pay for it. He thought his proposal deserved the support of the House. He thought that Her Majesty's Government would accede to it; as, from the speech of the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell), he gathered that he had some measure in contemplation by which the property of Ireland at large should be made to provide for the local distress of Ireland. He trusted that Ireland would have the benefit of such a measure, and that she would be placed in all respects upon an equal footing with England. He hoped to see the time when Ireland should enjoy every privilege which we enjoyed ourselves. They were our fellow-countrymen, and we ought to relieve them. He believed that his proposal was one which combined humanity with the requirements of the case, and in that conviction he had brought it forward. The noble Lord concluded by proposing, at the end of the Resolution, to add the words—

"But that the 50,000*l.* to be issued out of the

Consolidated Fund, for the purpose of affording relief to certain distressed Poor Law Unions in Ireland, be advanced by way of loan, to be repaid by means of a rate to be levied on the whole of the Unions in Ireland except the Unions receiving such relief."

Question proposed that those words be there added.

The **Earl of ARUNDEL and SURREY** begged to remind his noble Friend (Lord D. Stuart) that the Pope had sent remittances to Ireland during its distress; and with respect to sending money to him under present circumstances, it was not an unusual practice in the Catholic Church. It might also be remembered that this country had subscribed money for the benefit of Poland.

Mr. BANKES expressed his intention of opposing the vote, which he should not have done had the Government accepted the Amendment proposed, binding the House down that this should be the last one. He was surprised at the accusation of the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. J. O'Connell)—an accusation of "murder" against the party with whom he (Mr. Bankes) acted; and he was hardly less surprised at the expressions which had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He (Mr. Bankes) would not vote for the Amendment, for the reasons stated by the hon. Member for Dover (Mr. Rice), namely, that it was a mere pretence to speak of this advance as a "loan." That money would never be repaid. He could not join with the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the consolation which that right hon. Gentleman said he felt with respect to our treatment of Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to say, "Whatever may become of the people of Ireland—if they die even—we shall have the consolation of having done our duty." He (Mr. Bankes) denied that the Government had done its duty to Ireland. Why was it that Parliament had not been called together earlier if such an emergency existed? The Government had received official information of the distress that prevailed in Ireland as early as in the month of October last, and repeatedly since that time; and Captain Hamilton's communication, to which the noble Lord at the head of the Government had alluded, was received in December, and brought intelligence of the people being in a state of starvation. Why, then, was Parliament not called together until the 1st of February? The opening paragraph in the Speech from the Throne gave no indications of any great public exigency of this kind. It merely stated that the period had at length arrived when it was "usual" to recommence their labours. If, then, there were any delay or even refusal as to granting this vote, it was to be laid to the doors of Her Majesty's Ministry, and not to that of his (Mr. Bankes's) friends. If the Government had allowed them to justify their votes on this question to their constituencies, by accompanying the grant with the assertion that it was to be the last of the series, he (Mr. Bankes) would have had no objection to go along with them. He could not now vote in favour of the Government, for the reasons he had assigned; but he would not give them any unnecessary interruption in the progress of the measure.

Lord J. RUSSELL said, that he could not concur in the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northamptonshire (Mr. Stafford), for that was tantamount to a vote of censure on the Government; whereas he (Lord J. Russell) had pursued precisely the same course that had been taken by former Ministers under similar circumstances. With respect to the observations of the hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. Scrope), he must say, that the present grant ought to be made unconditionally as a gift, and not as a loan. The hon. Member for Dorsetshire (Mr. Bankes) was incorrect in his assertion that Captain Hamilton's letter was in the hands of the Government in December last. Its date was the 22nd of January, and the letter of the Poor Law Commissioners was dated the 2nd of February. He agreed so far with the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord D. Stuart) that the present grant ought not to be charged upon Ireland as a debt to be provided for by a special rate; but he certainly did think that it might become a question for the future consideration of Parliament whether any further grant ought not to be charged on some fund in Ireland, out of which it might be repaid.

Sir H. W. BARRON would reserve any observations which he had to make on the main question till the second reading of the Bill. With respect to the proposition of a grant in aid, all he could say was, that its effect on the part of Ireland with which he was connected, would be to drive all the landed proprietors out of the country, and reduce nine-tenths of Ireland to the same state in which the twenty-one unions were at the present moment.

MR. REYNOLDS would not trespass long upon their attention at so late an hour. He could not but feel great indignation at the undeserved insults that had been heaped upon his fellow-countrymen that night. He would pass over the frigid political economy of the hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume)—it was so frozen and icy that it required the burning heat of a West Indian climate to thaw it. Irishmen must, forsooth, learn self-reliance; but the hon. Gentleman had told the West Indian planters that he would not mind adding millions to the already overwhelming amount of the national debt, out of pure compassion to them. The hon. Member for Cockermouth (Mr. Horsman) had characterised his (Mr. Reynolds') countrymen as a set of beggars. Now, this reminded him of the story, where a traveller, having been robbed on his journey, was reduced to beggary, and was then called a pauper by the man who robbed him. This was just Ireland's case; and who had acted the part of the robber towards her, he (Mr. Reynolds) would leave hon. Gentlemen to determine for themselves. The speech of the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire (Mr. Disraeli) had been very entertaining. He (Mr. Reynolds) believed he only spoke the universal sentiment of the House when he said that the hon. Gentleman's speeches were all very entertaining. He (Mr. Reynolds) confessed he often put himself to considerable inconvenience to be present to listen to his eloquent displays. He heard him just as he would go to hear some famous actor. He (Mr. Disraeli) had charged the Government that night with sins both of omission and commission. He had charged them with not having brought forward some comprehensive measures for the relief of the Irish people; but although he (Mr. Reynolds) had followed the hon. Gentleman with great anxiety, he had certainly not heard him propound any measures of his own for that purpose. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Disraeli) was a striking embodiment of the truth that it required a very small degree of talent to find fault with a plan, but that a very considerable portion was necessary to produce a better; for, with all his eloquence and ability, he had not made a single suggestion of what he would have done for Ireland. Perhaps, indeed, he was like one of those quack doctors who intended to take out a patent for some universal specific of his own invention; but would not for a time divulge the secret, lest a rival should snatch away his nostrum and his fame at one and the same time. The hon. Gentleman was wise in his own generation. Let him hasten to take out his patent and publish his plan, however, and he (Mr. Reynolds) would not only support it if it was a good one, but would canvass for him besides. As to the grant before the House, his (Mr. Reynolds') only fault to find with it was, that it was so small. The old adage, "great cry and little wool," had in this case had a notable illustration. The hon. Member for Middlesex (Mr. Osborne) had said the grant would only support the people in the distressed unions for a fortnight, and, therefore, he would not vote for it; but he (Mr. Reynolds) would vote for the grant if it only supported the people for a week. He would remind the House that the greatest efforts had been made in Ireland to collect the rates. Not only had the police and soldiers been engaged in collecting them, but to effect the same object Her Majesty's Navy were employed to scour the coasts. He (Mr. Reynolds) trusted that this grant of 50,000*l.* was only the forerunner of other grants. The English Parliament had taken upon themselves the responsibility of governing Ireland; they said to those who advocated the repeal of the Union that Ireland should not be governed by a local Parliament; therefore it was the duty of England to provide for the starving poor, and to improve the social and political condition of her people.

MR. PIGOTT felt bound, in justice to his constituents and the taxpayers of England, who were themselves suffering great distress, to support the Amendment.

Question put, "That those words be there added:" House divided:—Ayes 9; Noes 157: Majority 148.

List of the AYES.

Bouverie, hon. E. P.
Cowan, C.
Gwyn, H.
Hardcastle, J. A.
Hodgson, W. N.
Scholefield, W.
Thompson, Col.
Willyams, H.
Willoughby, Sir H.

TELLERS.

Stuart, Lord D.
Pigott, F.

List of the NOES.

Abdy, T. N.
Adair, R. A. S.
Adderley, C. B.
Aglionby, H. A.
Anson, hon. Col.
Archdall, Capt. M.
Armstrong, R. B.
Arundel and Surrey, Earl of
Bagshaw, J.
Baines, M. T.
Bankes, G.
Baring, rt. hon. Sir F. T.
Barron, Sir H. W.
Bellew, R. M.
Berkeley, hon. Capt.
Bernard, Visct.
Birch, Sir T. B.

Blackall, S. W.
Blair, S.
Bourke, R. S.
Boyle, hon. Col.
Brackley, Visct.
Brockman, E. D.
Brotherton, J.
Carter, J. B.
Cavendish, hon. C. C.
Cavendish, W. G.
Clements, hon. C. S.
Cobbold, J. C.
Coles, H. B.
Craig, W. G.
Crowder, R. B.
Devereux, J. T.
Dodd, G.
Duncan, G.
Duncuft, J.
Dundas, A.
Dundas, G.
Dunne, F. P.
East, Sir J. B.
Ebrington, Visct.
Elliot, hon. J. E.
Evans, W.
Farrer, J.
Ferguson, Sir R. A.
Fitz Patrick, rt. hn. J. W.
Fitzwilliam, hon. G. W.
Foley, J. H. H.
Fordyce, A. D.
Forster, M.
Fortescue, C.
Fox, R. M.
Glyn, G. C.
Greene, J.
Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.
Grey, R. W.
Hamilton, Lord C.
Hastie, A.
Hastie, A.
Hawes, B.
Hay, Lord J.
Hayter, rt. hon. W. G.
Henry, A.
Herbert, H. A.
Hildyard, R. C.
Hobhouse, rt. hon. Sir J.
Hobhouse, T. B.
Hood, Sir A.
Hornby, J.
Howard, Lord E.
Howard, hon. C. W. G.
Hudson, G.
Hume, J.
Jervis, Sir J.
Keppel, hon. G. T.
Kershaw, J.
Labouchere, rt. hon. H.
Lascelles, hon. W. S.
Lewis, G. C.
M'Naghten, Sir E.
Macnamara, Maj.
M'Cullagh, W. T.
M'Gregor, J.
Maitland, T.
Matheson, A.
Matheson, Col.
Maule, rt. hon. F.
Milner, W. M. E.
Monsell, W.

Moore, G. H.
Morgan, H. K. G.
Morris, D.
Mulgrave, Earl of
Mullings, J. R.
Napier, J.
Norreys, Sir D. J.
Nugent, Sir P.
O'Brien, J.
O'Brien, T.
O'Connell, J.
O'Connell, M. J.
O'Flaherty, A.
Ogle, S. C. H.
Paget, Lord A.
Paget, Lord C.
Paget, Lord G.
Palmerston, Visct.
Parker, J.
Pechell, Capt.
Peto, S. M.
Pilkington, J.
Raphael, A.
Rawdon, Col.
Reynolds, J.
Rice, E. R.
Rich, H.
Robartes, T. J. A.
Roche, E. B.
Romilly, Sir J.
Russell, Lord J.
Russell, F. C. H.
Sandars, J.
Scrope, G. P.
Scully, F.
Seymer, H. K.
Sheil, rt. hon. R. L.
Simeon, J.
Smith, M. T.
Somerville, rt. hn. Sir W.
Spearman, H. J.
Spooner, R.
Stanley, E.
Stanton, W. H.
Strickland, Sir G.
Sullivan, M.
Talfourd, Serj.
Tancred, H. W.
Taylor, T. E.
Tenison, E. K.
Thicknesse, R. A.
Thornely, T.
Towneley, J.
Townshend, Capt.
Trelawny, J. S.
Vane, Lord H.
Waddington, H. S.
Walsh, Sir J. B.
Ward, H. G.
Watkins, Col. L.
Wawn, J. T.
Westhead, J. P.
Williamson, Sir H.
Wilson, J.
Wilson, M.
Wodehouse, E.
Wood, rt. hon. Sir C.
Wood, W. P.

TELLERS.
Tufnell, H.
Hill, Lord M.

Question put, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution." House divided:—Ayes 129; Noes 39: Majority 90.

List of the AYES.

Abdy, T. N.
Adair, R. A. S.
Anson, hon. Col.
Archdall, Capt. M.
Armstrong, R. B.
Arundel and Surrey, Earl of
Bagshaw, J.
Baines, M. T.
Baring, rt. hn. Sir F. T.
Barron, Sir H. W.
Bellew, R. M.
Berkeley, hon. Capt.
Bernard, Visct.
Birch, Sir T. B.
Blackall, S. W.
Bourke, R. S.
Boyle, hon. Col.
Brackley, Visct.
Brockman, E. D.
Brotherton, J.
Butler, P. S.
Carter, J. B.
Cavendish, hon. C. C.
Cavendish, W. G.
Clements, hon. C. S.
Craig, W. G.
Crowder, R. B.
Devereux, J. T.
Dundas, Adm.
Dunne, F. P.
Ebrington, Visct.
Elliot, hon. J. E.
Evans, W.
Ferguson, Sir R. A.
FitzPatrick, rt. hn. J. W.
Foley, J. H. H.
Forster, M.
Fortescue, C.
Fox, R. M.
Glyn, G. C.
Greene, J.
Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.
Grey, R. W.
Hamilton, Lord C.
Hawes, B.
Hay, Lord J.
Hayter, rt. hon. W. G.
Herbert, H. A.
Hobhouse, rt. hon. Sir J.
Hobhouse, T. B.
Hood, Sir A.
Howard, Lord E.
Howard, hon. C. W. G.
Jervis, Sir J.
Keppel, hon. G. T.
Labouchere, rt. hon. H.
Lascelles, hon. W. S.
Lewis, G. C.
Macnaghten, Sir E.
Macnamara, Maj.
M'Cullagh, W. T.
M'Gregor, J.
Mahon, The O'Gorman
Maitland, T.
Matheson, A.

Matheson, Col.
Maule, rt hon. F.
Maxwell, hon. J. P.
Milner, W. M. E.
Monsell, W.
Moore, G. H.
Morgan, H. K. G.
Mulgrave, Earl of
Napier, J.
Norreys, Sir D. J.
Nugent, Sir P.
O'Brien, J.
O'Brien, T.
O'Connell, J.
O'Connell, M. J.
O'Flaherty, A.
Ogle, S. C. H.
Paget, Lord A.
Paget, Lord C.
Paget, Lord G.
Palmerston, Visct.
Parker, J.
Peto, S. M.
Raphael, A.
Rawdon, Col.
Reynolds, J.
Rice, E. R.
Rich, H.
Robartes, T. J. A.
Roche, E. B.
Romilly, Sir J.
Russell, Lord J.
Russell, F. C. H.
Sandars, J.
Scholefield, W.
Scrope, G. P.
Scully, F.
Seymer, H. K.
Sheil, rt. hon. R. L.
Simeon, J.
Smith, M. T.
Somerville, rt. hn. Sir W.
Spearman, H. J.
Stanton, W. H.
Stuart, Lord D.
Sullivan, M.
Talfourd, Serj.
Tancred, H. W.
Taylor, T. E.
Tenison, E. K.
Thorneley, T.
Towneley, J.
Townshend, Capt.
Vane, Lord H.
Villiers, hon. C.
Ward, H. G.
Watkins, Col. L.
Westhead, J. P.
Williamson, Sir H.
Wilson, J.
Wilson, M.
Wodehouse, E.
Wood, rt. hon. Sir C.

TELLERS.
Tufnell, H.
Hill, Lord M.

List of the Noes.

Adderley, C. B.
Blair, S.
Bouverie, hon. E. P.
Cobbold, J. C.
Coles, H. B.
Cowan, C.
Dodd, G.
Duncan, G.
Duncuft, J.
Dundas, G.
East, Sir J. B.
Farrer, J.
Fordyce, A. D.
Gwyn, H.
Hardcastle, J. A.
Hastie, A.
Hastie, A.
Henry, A.
Hildyard, R. C.
Hodgson, W. N.
Hornby, J.
Hudson, G.
Kershaw, J.
Morris, D.
Mullings, J. R.
Pechell, Capt.
Pilkington, J.
Plowden, W. H. C.
Spooner, R.
Strickland, Sir G.
Thicknesse, R. A.
Thompson, Col.
Trelawny, J. S.
Waddington, H. S.
Walsh, Sir J. B.
Wawn, J. T.
Willyams, H.
Willoughby, Sir H.
Wood, W. P.

TELLERS.

Aglionby, H. A.
Hume, J.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bernal, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord John Russell, and Mr. Parker.

House adjourned at a quarter past Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, February 19, 1849.

Minutes.] Public Bills.—1ª Inland Revenue.

2ª Conveyance of Real Property Act Amendment; Corrupt Practices at Elections; Marriage (Scotland); Registering Births, &c. (Scotland).

Petitions Presented. From the Presbytery of Ayr, against the Marriage (Scotland) Bill; also from the same Place, against Registering Births, &c. (Scotland) Bill.—From Limerick, complaining of the Inefficiency of the Present System of the Poor Law (Ireland).—From Chesterfield, against a Certain Clause in the Proceedings against Clergy Bill.—From Ardrossan, Saltcoats, and Irvine, against any Alteration of the Navigation Laws; also against any Measure for Imposing a Tax on British Shipping for the Relief of Merchant Seamen.

CORRUPT PRACTICES AT ELECTIONS BILL.

The LORD CHANCELLOR moved the Second Reading of this Bill. His Lordship was understood to say, that the measure was intended to carry out the objects sought to be effected by the Bill for the suppression of bribery and other corrupt practices at elections, which passed through the House of Commons last year, but which had reached their Lordships' House at too late a period of the Session to admit of its passing through all its stages and becoming law. By the Act of the 5th and 6th Victoria, it was provided that when charges of bribery and corrupt practices were withdrawn from the consideration of the Committee to which the petitions against the election were referred by an arrangement between the parties, as was often the case, the House might reappoint the Committee, in order to investigate the question of bribery anew. The object of the present Bill was to give additional facilities for inquiry in such cases, so as to apply an adequate remedy to the evils which were found to arise under the operation of that law. It provided, that in all cases where a charge of bribery or corruption was made, or where the Committee saw evidence of bribery and corruption, they should have power to inquire and report to the House the facts which appeared before it; and it would then be for the House to decide whether upon the whole of the facts the case was one which called for further investigation. There would then be two courses open for the House to pursue. They might reappoint the Committee, not with a view of invalidating the return, but merely for the purpose of pursuing an inquiry into the bribery and corrupt practices that were alleged to have taken place, with a view of ascertaining by what means a repetition of such practices might be prevented. As, however, an investigation before a Committee might, in some cases, be attended with considerable expense, from the necessity of bringing up a great number of witnesses, it was provided that, if the House should so think fit, they might appoint Commissioners to investigate the matter on the spot where the election had taken place. The House would therefore have to decide on each particular case as it arose. It was not proposed to expose parties to penalties. It was merely desired that Parliament should be placed in a situation to ascertain how each case should be dealt with. The noble and learned Lord concluded by moving the second reading of the Bill.

Lord DENMAN said, he did not wish to throw any obstacle in the way of providing a remedy for the evil which existed, and he would not therefore oppose the second reading of the Bill, though he believed it was open to the same objections as the Bill of last year. The latter Bill came before their Lordships towards the close of the Session, and when it was too late to proceed with it. He had been anxious to give it his support; but on making a digest of the Bill, he found that every one of its provisions was actually an argument against the Bill itself. The provision with regard to the appointment of a Commissioner was, in his mind, peculiarly objectionable. The Commissioner was to be armed with powers such as were possessed by scarcely any tribunal in the country at the present time; and such a person ought to be removed from all influence from the parties concerned. He believed it would be extremely difficult to select proper persons for such an office. The Bill did not provide for any ultimate proceedings, but appeared to him to empower Parliament to do merely what Parliament had full power to do already. It was his intention not to oppose the second reading, but to move that the Bill be referred to a Committee upstairs.

LORD BROUGHAM said, he felt a strong desire to avoid throwing any impediment in the way of putting an end to the detestable, demoralising, and criminal course now pursued, of sowing broad-cast perjury as well as corruption through the country. He was anxious to let the Bill proceed, in order to try whether, at a future stage, the objections which he had to it might not be remedied. He intended moving, either in a Committee upstairs, or during the progress of the Bill through the House, some amendments, which he hoped would conduce to a better state of political morality on the part of the constituencies. He hoped and trusted that the Bill of his hon. Friend Sir John Pakington, the outline of which he had himself suggested two years ago, as well as again last year, would have better success than its predecessors of a similar character. They ought to leave no effort untried to get rid of the disgraceful crime of bribery. They had, within the last week, an instance in one of the courts where a witness, who represented himself to be an Irish barrister, admitted that he was to get 10*l.* for his evidence, and 30*l.* if that evidence succeeded in getting a verdict for one of the parties. Surely, where such acts as that were perpetrated, some alteration in the law ought to be made by which adequate punishment would be awarded.

LORD STANLEY said, that he quite concurred in the observations which had fallen from the noble and learned Lords (Denman and Brougham). The Lord Chancellor had correctly stated, that a measure upon this subject was introduced in the other House of Parliament last year, and passed that House, and that it was then brought up to this House, but was afterwards laid aside, without having undergone any discussion. But that was not the measure which was now submitted to the consideration of their Lordships; and he regretted that it should have been represented as the same. The Bill which passed the House of Commons last year was of a very different character. In the course of last year, during the proceedings before the Election Committee, there were brought to light several gross cases of corruption and malversation, some of them on the part of high legal functionaries connected with Her Majesty's Government, which excited great sensation at the time, but which were never investigated before Committees of the House of Commons, and in reference to which Bills were introduced in the House of Commons by private Members of Parliament, for the purpose of enabling the allegations to be investigated before a Committee. But for one reason or another Her Majesty's Government objected to the Bills that were brought in from time to time by those private Members, and stated, that in the course of the Session they would take upon themselves to bring forward a measure upon the subject. It was not, however, until the 13th of July that a measure was introduced on the part of the Government, enabling an investigation to take place into the alleged corrupt practices that had occurred, as well as providing for future cases; and that Bill was not read a second time until the latter end of that month, and consequently it could not be passed that Session. The measure now under consideration was not the same, but a measure which, passing by all the circumstances and allegations out of which the measure of last year arose, provided a prospective remedy for all imaginary and possible abuses and grievances with respect to bribery and corruption. The present Bill went upon the principle of fishing for grievances, and instituting investigations for the purpose of founding criminal proceedings upon them—investigations not upon an indictment or a positive charge laid, but in the search for materials upon which to found a charge. As the law now stood, if a Committee of the House of Commons should be of opinion that there had been before them a case of bribery or of corrupt practices, which had been insufficiently investigated, and into which they thought further inquiry should be made, it was perfectly competent for that Committee to recommend, and for the House to sanction, some further investigation before that Committee. But this Bill would leave no option whatever to the Committee. If at any time hereafter a Committee should be nominated to try an election, and a charge of corrupt practices should be made or stated before them, whether in support of the petition or by way of recrimination, what were the Committee to do under the provisions of the Bill? If any such charge were made as stated in the Committee, the Bill provided that it should be obligatory upon them forthwith to investigate the circumstances relating to the allegations or the hints so dropped before them. And how were they to investigate them? Their Lordships would observe that, whether it was a charge made on the part of the petitioners, or casually dropped in the way of recrimination, the Committee would have no alternative but a ruinous expense to both parties to proceed with the inquiry and investigate the charges submitted to them. Now this, he thought, was carrying the principle of investigating merely possible corrupt practices to an extent which might lead to the greatest abuse. Then when the investigation had proceeded to a certain extent, the Committee were to report whether further inquiry was desirable, and if so, whether it should be referred to themselves or to a Commissioner. He (Lord Stanley) felt that a Committee of the House of Commons having this option, and after sitting perhaps fifteen or sixteen days on an election petition, would most probably report, if it were a case in which they believed further inquiry should be instituted, that it should be referred to a Commissioner and not to themselves, and then would follow the necessary consequence of appointing Commissioners to be sent down into the borough or place in which the investigation was to take place. Now, what was this Commissioner? Legal rules he had none to guide him. The charge he had to investigate he had not before him—evidence to apply there was none. He was sent on a fishing inquiry to some borough or county—to inquire what? If there was a charge that some one person had been guilty of bribery, or that bribery or corrupt practices had been committed by a number of individuals; and if evidence could be taken more conveniently upon the spot than in a Committee of the House of Commons, then he (Lord Stanley) could understand the reason for delegating to a single Commissioner the authority of the House of Commons. But here it was provided that the Commissioner should inquire generally into the manner in which the election mentioned in the report had been conducted—whether any corrupt practices were committed at such election; and, if so, ascertain the nature and particulars of such practices, and then report to Her Majesty the evidence so taken. The Commissioner was also, he believed, further to report whether, upon the evidence he was able to collect, bribery or corruption had been usually practised in that borough or county at former elections; and a provision of that nature must, of course, very largely extend the Commissioner's inquiries. Well, the Commissioner having reported, what followed next? Why, the result must be no other than what ensued now. The House of Commons was, upon the report of the Commissioner, to take such steps as it might think proper to bring the parties to justice. Let their Lordships, then, mark the mode in which the Commissioner was to proceed in his inquiry. First, he was to investigate, by any means that might be suggested to him, whether anonymously or otherwise, if any bribery had taken place at the previous or any other election in the borough, by any persons whomsoever; and in support of this charge, and to carry on this fishing inquiry, he was to call before him all such persons as he might think fit, and require the production, at their hands, of all such papers and documents as he might think fit. He (Lord Stanley) must say that this provision, too, would lay the foundation for endless abuse, and for converting the purposes of the inquiry to the private injury of parties, without any relation whatever to the administration of justice. For his part he conceived that this was a most dangerous principle to adopt. There had been cases where, for securing the ends of justice, Parliament had thought proper to grant an indemnity to persons who had come forward to give evidence in the investigation of some very gross or crying abuse; and the Bill under consideration laid it down, not as an exception, but as a rule of law, that where a Commissioner should be appointed to investigate, not whether any particular individual had been guilty of bribery, but whether there had been any bribery committed at all, he should have power to call persons before him as witnesses, and demand the production of their papers, which the persons so summoned should under all circumstances be compelled to produce, as well as to answer all inquiries, although they might be liable to criminate themselves thereby. The Lord Chancellor had truly stated that the object of the Bill was to lay the ground for future proceedings; but he was at a loss to understand another provision of the Bill, which not only indemnified all parties who might appear as witnesses from any proceedings against themselves, but prevented what they might disclose being made use of against other parties and themselves from being at any time brought forward as witnesses in any subsequent proceedings, provided they had been examined before the Commissioner. Now, suppose the Commissioner having heard the evidence of twenty persons, reported the case, and the House of Commons directed the Attorney General to prosecute: when the Attorney General instituted the prosecution under the House of Commons, and as the next step to the inquiry before the Commissioner, in came this provision of the Bill, which enacted that no person who should have been examined before a Committee or a Commissioner should be brought forward as a witness for the plaintiff upon any information or indictment for the corrupt practices in relation to which he should have been examined before such Committee or Commissioner. Why, what was this but extinguishing the whole of the evidence upon which alone in any subsequent prosecution they could proceed? The case was reported by the Commissioner, and the House of Commons directed a prosecution by the Attorney General; but when the witnesses were called in, the Attorney General would be told that they might refuse to be examined, that the law prohibited the calling of witnesses to substantiate the charge, without whose evidence the charge could not be sustained. [The LORD CHANCELLOR was understood to express his dissent from the noble Lord.] He (Lord Stanley) was glad to hear from the noble and learned Lord that he had misunderstood the provisions of the Bill. It appeared to him, however, that the measure threw insuperable obstacles in the way of the very purpose which it was designed to effect—namely, the punishment of parties who were guilty of bribery or corrupt practices at elections. He would not oppose the second reading of the Bill, but he thought it ought to be referred to a Select Committee; and he was of opinion that if their Lordships consented to the second reading, it should not be understood that they were, therefore, to be precluded from rejecting it on the third reading if the evidence to be taken before the Select Committee should fail to show the necessity for the measure.

The LORD CHANCELLOR felt bound to vindicate the Bill from the attack which had been made upon it by the noble Lord. Their Lordships were aware that all the attempts hitherto made to prevent bribery at elections for Members of the House of Commons, had proved unsuccessful. It was only necessary to advert to what took place in the House of Commons last Session, to show that the laws were not operative to prevent bribery and corruption. To some extent it prevailed at every general election: it was for their Lordships to judge whether they would endeavour to apply a remedy. No one could wish to allow the law to remain as it was. The question then arose, why was the law inadequate for the purpose of repressing bribery? First, it was to be observed that there was an understanding between the parties themselves: those who were the candidates elected, and those who were the candidates rejected, when they came before a Committee of the House of Commons, very often found it to be for their interest not to go deeply into the manner in which the election had been conducted. Another ground which protected persons engaged in this description of offence was, that the law affected them indirectly, and opened the door to vexatious actions against the individuals with whom they were connected. It was not merely because they were not protected from the consequences of their acts that witnesses could not give their evidence—they had another motive, namely, the effect which their evidence might have on others. It was, therefore, indispensably necessary that the investigation proposed, which was only for the purpose of obtaining proofs, should be guarded by Bill, and that care should be taken that no one should profit by the evidence produced at it. The object of the Bill was not to lay a foundation for prosecution, but to take measures to prevent a repetition of the acts disclosed on the inquiry. As matters now stood, though every one might be satisfied that a case of bribery and corruption existed, yet they had not the materials before them to pronounce as to its existence in fact; and to procure those materials the Bill was necessary. There were no means at present of obtaining the information requisite to lay a foundation for Parliamentary proceedings; this measure would enable them to ascertain the facts, and thereby to form such a foundation.

Bill read 2ª.

MARRIAGE (SCOTLAND) BILL — REGISTERING BIRTHS, &c. (SCOTLAND) BILL.

LORD CAMPBELL moved the Second Reading of the Bill to amend the Law of Marriage in Scotland. In doing so, he need only remind their Lordships of the great importance of the marriage contract, and of the absolute necessity that there should be, in every well-governed country, both facility and safety secured to those entering into it. To do this it was necessary to take care that the evidence of the contract should be, in all cases, clear and decisive, so that the status of the woman might be ascertained, and no question raised as to the legitimacy of the children. The present law of Scotland did not meet any of those conditions. By the law of Scotland one mode of marriage was recognised, which was very ordinarily adopted and very laudable. Marriages might be celebrated in the church or other place by a regularly ordained clergyman; but, for all civil purposes, there might be a marriage contracted in Scotland by a simple acknowledgment of the parties that they were married; there might be a valid marriage by a promise of completion *de futuro;* there might be a valid marriage by cohabitation and custom. The consequence of this state of things was to place the woman in a degrading situation; it was most unjust to her; the law operated disadvantageously for all parties, for nobody who had lived a short time in Scotland could know whether he was married or not. Their Lordships must have heard a great deal of Gretna-green marriages; but it was not only the blacksmith of Gretna-green who operated as a priest of Hymen; for all along the border there were a set of functionaries who carried on a very thriving trade in that line. The hierophant of Gretna-green, he understood, had declared before his death, that he had united in his time 30,000 couples. He believed many of those who went to Gretna-green were carried away by the feeling of fun, and in their ecstasies never considered that the ceremony was binding upon them, but merely as a joke, and thought, when the year came round, they might make the same excursion in company with a new partner. This Bill would enact that marriage should only be valid in one of two ways—either by a religious ceremony performed before the clergyman, or by the parties appearing before a public officer, and signing with their names a public document, attesting that they were man and wife, which should be preserved in evidence. The measure thus proceeded on the same principle as the Marriage Act of 1836, which had operated most beneficially. In England a marriage might now be constituted before either a clergyman or a magistrate. He was happy to say that the facility of going before the magistrate had not in very many instances been taken advantage of, for in the great majority of instances the marriage took place in the presence of the clergyman; and he believed that in Scotland, in like manner, marriages would almost always be celebrated before the pastor of the parish. The publication of banns would not be required under this Bill, but there were provisions to effect the same object; all that it was proposed to require was that there should be either proclamation of banns, or that due notice of the marriage should be given to the registrar, which would effect all the purposes of banns. It had been said that this Bill would, for the first time, establish clandestine marriages in Scotland. He owned it was with the greatest astonishment he had heard that allegation. At present indeed, in Scotland, persons might be made man and wife by what was in fact a clandestine marriage, or little better than no marriage at all; but hereafter, all persons contracting marriage must go before a clergyman in orders, or a magistrate. The noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Aberdeen) contended that there had been no complaints of the present law; but upon such a subject could you expect any? A great many petitions, it was true, had been presented against the Bill, but this arose from a misunderstanding, as there was a clause originally placed in it, of disqualifying schoolmasters from being registrars. The moment he (Lord Campbell) saw that clause, it was expunged. That clause did not appear now; it had been erroneously thought to be directed against the Established Church, for which he (Lord Campbell) had the greatest respect: hence the petitions. A Select Committee had last Session examined the Bill, which was attended by all the noble Lords Members of that House who were connected with Scotland, and the opposition had now very much subsided. There was another Bill respecting registration, for which the noble Earl opposite had called, and to which he believed the noble Earl did not intend to offer any opposition; that also stood for a second reading.

The EARL of ABERDEEN said, notwithstanding the reasons offered by the noble and learned Lord for the Bills of which he had moved the second reading, he regretted that he must venture to state some objection to that affecting the constitution of marriage; to the Registration Bill he did not intend to offer any. His opposition to the former Bill did not arise from any blind admiration of the law now existing, nor from any unwillingness to agree to large and sweeping amendments of the law where these were necessary. The noble and learned Lord would perhaps recollect that last Session he had given his humble and zealous support to a measure for carrying through large alterations in the law of Scotland. His opposition to the present measure arose entirely from a conviction that it was uncalled for, that it was most impolitic, and he thought likely to be very injurious to the people of Scotland. Everybody must admit that a complete registration of births, deaths, and marriages was highly desirable. At the same time the advantages of such a system might be over-rated—we might pay too dearly for them; but at all events he must complain that this great alteration in the law of the country affecting marriages should be made, as a means of perfecting the system of registration. If the noble and learned Lord thought the marriage law in Scotland so defective as he stated, let him, quite irrespectively of registration, introduce a Bill for improving it. But to take this Bill by way of perfecting a Registration Bill appeared to him quite preposterous. The case was not at all similar to that of the alteration of the marriage law in England some years back. The alteration effected in this country by the registration of marriages arose from the intolerable grievance arising from Lord Hardwicke's marriage law, by which Dissenters were so much aggrieved that it was thought right to relieve them from the necessity of coming to the Established Church for the purpose of effecting a marriage. In Scotland, nothing of that kind existed. The person was married by the minister of the religious sect to which he belonged, and there was no occasion to establish any court of registration for the purpose of constituting marriage. Clandestine marriages were extremely few; and the worst that could happen from passing a Registration Bill, with the existing law of marriage in Scotland, would only be, that to a certain extent the registration would be imperfect where clandestine marriages were in question. Who had ever asked for the measure? Where were the complaints against the existing law? Certainly two or three learned Lords in that House had urged some; but, with great deference to them, he begged to say that the united opinion of the country, repeatedly pronounced for two years consecutively, in a multitude of petitions against the proposition, whilst there were none in its favour, deserved some attention on a question which affected the social condition of every man. The existing law had worked well in Scotland. For centuries no complaint had been made against it; and under its operation the people would bear comparison with any of their neighbours upon all moral and religious qualifications. For these reasons, he was not one of those who concurred with the noble and learned Lord as to the necessity of the measure. If it so happened that offences against the existing law were extensive, it would be the duty of Parliament to apply a remedy to counteract them; but the fact was, they were extremely restricted, so much so that the feeling of the country upon such a subject deserved to be respected. He would remind the noble and learned Lord of the terms of the 18th Article of the Act of Union with Scotland. It was there specially engaged, that laws affecting civil public right, policy, and civil government, might be made the same in all parts of the united kingdom; but that laws concerning private rights should only be altered for the evident utility of the subject within Scotland. He must say, upon the principle of this Article, that some further proof was required of this measure being for the utility of the subject in Scotland, than had been offered by the noble and learned Lord, after the almost innumerable petitions that had been presented against it. He entreated the House to consider that they were not legislating for persons governed by the same laws, and influenced by the same opinions and prejudices, as the people of England. They were legislating for a country under an entirely different system of law; for a people whose feelings and prejudices were altogether at variance with their own; and to which, nevertheless, it was their duty to give every attention. The foundation of the law of Scotland was the foundation of the law of all civilised Europe; the law from which this country was continually borrowing, with the view of rendering its own more perfect; and it was one deserving the highest respect and honour. But the Bill before the House imposed restraints upon the celebration of marriage in Scotland which that law did not recognise. It was essential to the happiness and morality of the country that marriage should be made as easy as possible. In England marriage was considered to be indissoluble. He did not enter into the question whether that principle was right or wrong; but he must say that the practice was entirely at variance with the principle. Every Session marriages were dissolved, not only by an exceptional and legislative proceeding, but by a judicial Act; and any person coming to that House for a divorce, upon proof of his wife's adultery, obtained it *ex debito justitiæ.* A man in such circumstances would be treated with the height of injustice if their Lordships did not grant him a divorce from that marriage which they said was indissoluble. Yet what was more inconsistent? He knew that in this country marriage was not considered a sacrament The only rational explanation of marriage ever having been considered indissoluble in England was, that it was held as a sacrament by the Roman Catholic Church, and that, therefore, it was indissoluble. But in the early period of the Reformation, marriages could be dissolved, although no ecclesiastical court now existed by which such dissolution could be pronounced. The fact of marriage being considered a sacrament by the Roman Catholic Church, arose, he believed, from a mistake in the translation of the words of Scripture: the words which ought to have been translated, "this is a great mystery," being given in the *Vulgate,* "this is a great sacrament." England, however, was the only Protestant country in Europe in which marriage was held indissoluble. The law of Scotland, in this respect, which he trusted the noble and learned Lord would not think it necessary to alter, for it was preferable to the supposed indissolubility professed in England, permitted only two causes for divorce—namely, adultery and wilful desertion for the length of four years. Believing it was of great importance to the morality of the country that marriage should be easy, he also thought it of equal importance that divorce should be difficult; and the law of Scotland, in that respect, stood upon a most rational and safe foundation. Marriage, by the law of Scotland, was a civil contract, the essence and whole character of which depended upon mutual consent. This was also the doctrine of the civil and the canon law, *consensus facit matrimonium.* He could see no reason why proof of that consent should be different from the evidence afforded in any other civil contract. The noble and learned Lord had referred to the other irregular modes of marriage, all of which, however, were equally valid according to the law of Scotland. The first of these was marriage according to written promise, followed by intercourse. This, be it remembered, was acknowledged as a binding contract in every civilised country. It might be proved by the writing of the man, or by oath. Then, why should a man be allowed to take advantage of a fraud, and abandon the woman whom he had contracted to marry? He contended that the present laws and customs of marriage in Scotland, so far from having a demoralising effect, tended materially to promote good morals in that country. The crime of seduction was of very rare occurrence in Scotland; but in England, where a promise of marriage did not constitute in any practical sense a marriage contract, the cases of seduction were innumerable, or, at least, they enormously exceeded the proportion of similar cases in Scotland, proving that this law was a protection to females. He knew the noble and learned Lord would say, that by it many men had been entrapped by artful and designing women. He did not pretend to deny that cases of that sort occasionally occurred; but he maintained, that for one man entrapped by an artful woman, hundreds of women were ruined by artful men. It was for the female that the interests and sympathies of the House ought to be called forth, and not exclusively for the protection of men, who were so much better able to protect themselves. For these reasons he saw no ground why this mode of contract should not be allowed to continue. The same with a declaration before witnesses. Where a mutual declaration was made before witnesses, he did not see any reason why it should not be admitted as proof of a consent having been given, as well as a written promise. So also with marriages by repute. No length of cohabitation would constitute a marriage by repute, if anything appeared by which it was shown the parties did not intend to contract marriage. No doubt cohabitation was *primâ facie* evidence of such an intention, but twenty years living together would not necessarily constitute it, if there was evidence of such not being the intention; whilst six months was sufficient if it were proved that mutual consent had been given. He had no objection to some provision to define the legal effect of cohabitation; but as to saying that a man could not tell whether he was married or not, such a case was impossible; because if it was clearly shown that cohabitation was the effect of mutual consent, repute would constitute marriage. However, he wished it to be understood that while he was unwilling to disturb the present methods of marriage in Scotland, he was quite ready to agree to any measure to prevent the law of Scotland from being abused by being made subsidiary to the purposes of natives of England who might desire to repair to that country in order to evade the law of England. To such a measure he could have no objection; for, although the people of Scotland were perfectly satisfied with their own law, they had no desire to extend it elsewhere. On the whole, he was inclined to think that the noble and learned Lord opposite had failed to make out a case to show that the present Bill was required. To the Registration Bill he had no objection whatsoever, but he thought the Marriage Bill would impose restraints which would be inconvenient and burdensome to the poorer classes of the community. As the system of compulsory registration was now in Scotland, it might be well to see how it worked before they ventured to interfere with the law of marriage. If they found that the Registration Bill worked well, he should not be disposed to offer any opposition to any measure which it might be deemed judicious hereafter to introduce to remedy any imperfections that might be proved to exist in the present marriage system. The Bill before the House, however, provided that marriage should only be solemnised in one or other of two ways in Scotland, and to that provision he could not consent.

Lord BROUGHAM expressed his cordial approval of the Bill, but regretted that its ill-assorted marriage with the Registration Bill had led to this result, as in other unions, that the objections which were thought to prevail against the one measure, had been communicated to the other. The impression appeared to have gone abroad that the Marriage Bill had been brought in to complete the Registration Bill; but the very reverse was the fact. It was the Registration Bill that was designed to be auxiliary to the Marriage Bill. The Scottish law in the abstract was a good one, but it was nevertheless open to objections which he trusted the present measure would be efficient to remove. The Bill would be decidedly salutary in this respect, that it would throw impediments in the way of clandestine marriages, which were, for the most part, ill-considered and mischievous. There were many persons in Scotland who were in utter ignorance as to whether they were married or not—who could not tell whether they were free to marry again, or whether they might not be liable to indictment for bigamy. It was, in fact, sometimes a most difficult thing, as the law now stood, for a man to ascertain whether he was married or single. Some of the most perplexing and intricate cases that had ever been presented for adjudication at the bar of that House, were those in which the question was raised, whether A. B. was married to C. D. It was acknowledged all over Europe that the contract of marriage was a civil contract, and even the Council of Trent did not render it imperative that a priest should assist at the ceremony. In France, although the nuptials were performed with all the ceremonious splendour of the Roman ritual and mass—or even high mass might be celebrated on the occasion—the marriage was, in point of fact, not worth anything unless it was attested before a notary or magistrate, because it was the civil contract that constituted the marriage. The disputes as to legitimacy or illegitimacy, which were continually arising in this country, because of the imperfect state of the marriage law, were numerous and most perplexing. There was no end to the doubts upon the question. If a man went into the Court of Chancery to claim personal property, he was declared to be legitimate; but if he went into the Queen's Bench or Common Pleas, to lay claim to lands by the process of ejectment, he was declared to be a bastard: if, however, he went back to Chancery, then he became legitimate again. He entirely concurred with the noble Earl who had spoken last in the opinion that in Scotland, as in England, it was highly desirable that the marriage contract should have a heavenly sanction, and that it should be celebrated with solemnity. He cordially responded to the sentiment

> "Nec Deus intersit nisi dignus vindice nodus;"

and it was because he believed this Bill would promote so desirable an end, that he was prepared to give it his warm support.

The noble Earl thought it was a hardship that a man should be compelled to comply with the provisions of the Act, instead of being married at once; but it should be borne in mind that this measure gave him a little time to consider; and surely that was desirable when there was a question of engaging in the most solemn and responsible of all earthly compacts. No other measure except that now under consideration had been suggested to remedy evils which he believed to be most serious; and he, therefore, should not hesitate to give his cordial support to the Bill.

The Earl of ABERDEEN, in explanation, remarked, that any one who should judge of the results of the existing state of the law of marriage in Scotland from the speech which had been just delivered by his noble and learned Friend, might be induced to imagine that the greater portion of their Lordships' time was passed in hearing and determining upon appeals from decisions of the courts of Scotland on cases of contested marriages and descent, on account of being clandestinely or illegally celebrated, and so on. Now, he (the Earl of Aberdeen) had been at the trouble of calling for returns from the Courts of Session, touching the results of all such proceedings as those during the last eighteen years. And from these documents it appeared that, in all that period, and since the extinction of the old exclusive jurisdiction of the ancient consistorial courts in such questions, 104 cases had been brought before the court, of which sixty-eight had been followed up to judgment; of these only six such appeals from the Courts of Session had been prosecuted to that House; and of those six, in one only had the sentence of the court below been reversed.

Lord CAMPBELL begged to explain, for the further information of noble Lords, that of the 104 cases alluded to, the marriages in thirty-four had been declared to be valid; in thirty-seven, sentence had established their invalidity; and the other cases were left in such a position as that, in all human probability, it would never be found possible to determine whether the marriages in dispute were good or bad.

The Duke of ARGYLL signified his intention to give the Bill his cordial support. It was not correct to say that the Marriage Bill had been brought in to complete the Registration Bill: it was only true that they had been introduced coincidentally or contemporaneously, and the noble Earl seemed to have some objection to the measure now under discussion on that account. But he (the Duke of Argyll) would entreat noble Lords to judge of the important measure which they were now considering on its own merits, and without reference to any other Bill. If he understood aright the noble Earl who had opposed the measure, his principal objection to it was that it tended to limit in a dangerous degree the existing facilities to contract marriage; but he (the Duke of Argyll) did not believe it would have any such operation. He begged to call their Lordships' attention to the provisions of the Bill. Under the existing law, in Scotland, marriages were legal if performed before a clergyman; but there were also several irregular modes of contracting matrimony, which were likewise legal. The present Bill purposed to recognise all marriages performed before ministers of religion of all denominations whatsoever, and, in addition, it contemplated that those few persons who might have an objection to be married before a clergyman might be married, if they preferred, before a secular functionary, who was to be called a registrar. He was at a loss to understand how the noble Earl opposite could entertain grave objections to the practical working of the measure, for the Bill provided every facility for marriages which would otherwise have to be proved. There could be no doubt that consent was the principal element of the marriage contract; but assuredly it ought to be a consent, not given in a moment of passion, but a consent the result of mature deliberation, and which might be avowed freely in the face of the world, and more especially in the presence of those who ought to be the best judges of the propriety of the contract. He trusted that there would be no misapprehension in Scotland as to the true object of this measure. It would make no difference to the people of Scotland. They were a people of high moral feeling, and were usually married with consent of all concerned, and by a minister of religion. The present Bill would not prevent them from doing so for the future—on the contrary, it would have a decided tendency to encourage marriages before a clergyman, for it provided that the fee to be paid to the registrar should be considerably larger than that paid to the clergyman, and thus there would be a pecuniary as well as a moral advantage in favour of marriage before a clergyman. In conclusion, he would only state that, being of opinion that the

Bill was calculated to do much good, and not perceiving the force of the objections urged against it by the noble Lord opposite, he should not hesitate to support the measure.

The EARL of EGLINTON regretted that a suggestion for the postponement of this Bill, which he had thrown out on a former evening, had not been attended to. To him, the main objection to the Registration Bill appeared to consist in the great staff which would be required for its machinery. If he was rightly informed, this must embrace some 2,000 registrars and other officers in Scotland, who would be nominated under this measure, and at a very heavy expense indeed—an expense which would be the more felt, coming as it did in addition to the increased expenditure on the poor, caused by the New Poor Law Act. As for the Marriage Bill, nothing assuredly could be more reprehensible in principle, or more objectionable in its effects, than the law of marriage as hitherto existing in Scotland; and on that account he was disposed to give every chance to these attempts to remedy or modify it. If this Bill could have the effect of driving people away from their clergymen, he would most certainly oppose it; but he did not think that it would be attended with such consequences; and though he preferred the minister to the registrar, he preferred the registrar to the blacksmith.

LORD CAMPBELL in reply, complained that he had been greatly misunderstood by his noble and learned Friend (Lord Brougham) in what he had said as to what ought to be the nature of the contract. Now, all he (Lord Campbell) had contended for was that the contract of marriage ought to be entered into with great deliberation, and that it should be recorded with all due care and solemnity, in legal form.

Bill read 2^{a}.

House adjourned till To-morrow.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, February 19, 1849.

MINUTES.] NEW MEMBERS SWORN.—For Devon (Southern Division), Sir Ralph Lopes, Bart.; for Thetford, Hon. Francis Baring.

PUBLIC BILLS.—1° Consolidated Fund (8,000,000*l.*); Offences (Ireland); Commons' Inclosure; Relief of Distress (Ireland); Buckingham Summer Assizes; Vice Guardians of Unions (Ireland).

3° and passed:—Habeas Corpus Suspension (Ireland).

PETITIONS PRESENTED. By Mr. Ellice, from Coventry, for Alteration of the Law respecting the Church of England Clergy.—By Mr. Osborne, from the Parish of St. Pancras, Middlesex, against the Habeas Corpus Suspension (Ireland) Bill.—By Mr. Ellice, from the City of Coventry, for referring War Disputes to Arbitration.

SOUTHAMPTON SMALL TENEMENTS RATING BILL.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a Second Time." Amendment proposed, "To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"

MR. COCKBURN considered that this Bill was a measure calculated to have a prejudicial effect both upon the Parliamentary and the municipal franchises. It proposed that all tenements under 10*l.* should be rated in the name of the landlord, and not in the name of the tenant, the consequence of which would be, that all the municipal voters of that rating would be swept off the register. It was said, no doubt, that by this Bill occupiers had a right to claim to be rated; but they all knew that under such circumstances few would avail themselves of the privilege. He objected also to the Bill as a piece of mere class legislation, because by it the owners of small properties were made liable for the rates of their tenants, while the owners of large and splendid houses were allowed to escape altogether. Further, it was here attempted, by a piece of mere local agitation, to alter the general law of the land, which he thought ought not to be done unless with the general consent of the inhabitants. How far this was from being the case here, might be judged from the fact, that the town-council of Southampton, by a majority of twenty-three to nine, determined to give this Bill all the opposition in their power, while at a meeting held in the parish of St. Mary—the parish which was likely to be most affected by this Bill—the parishioners were almost unanimous against the measure. If there was any evil existing in Southampton from the present state of things, it was not more than at other places; and if the obnoxious clauses of the Reform Bill—the ratepaying clauses—were repealed, he should not object to such a measure being made general over the country.

MR. WILLCOX seconded the Amendment, concurring in all the objections stated by his hon. Colleague (Mr. Cockburn). The Bill had one object in view, whilst there was a different one in the background. It was a wolf in sheep's clothing.

MR. MACKINNON said, he was very sorry to see his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Southampton oppose this measure: the rates in Southampton were very heavy; there were within the ancient borough 6,000 rated tenements; of these 1,800 paid no rates whatever, and the burden fell consequently upon the remaining 4,200. What was proposed by the present Bill? It was, that where the rates had not heretofore been paid by the occupiers of very poor tenements, they should now have the power, if they did pay, to deduct it from their landlords' rents; or, if they did not pay, that then the owner should be obliged to pay for them. A number of pauper tenements had been built on speculation in the town, which were let to Irishmen, or persons who had scarcely any property: these persons skulked away from their holdings before the rates were due, and nothing could be got from them, while the owners were making from 10 to 12 per cent on their money. It was said, that the town and neighbourhood of Southampton were opposed to the Bill. What was the fact? The Bill had been discussed in every vestry in the town, and at every vestry meeting it had been supported. It was true there was a majority of the town-council against the measure, because they were for the most part the owners of these poor houses which were now proposed to be rated. The hon. and learned Gentleman had also designated this measure as a piece of partial legislation. Now he could state that the principle of this Bill had been adopted in several other towns, and had been found to work admirably well. His hon. Friend near him (Mr. Godson) had last year introduced a similar measure for the borough of Kidderminster, and there were fourteen other towns which had Bills of the same character, and they were found to work admirably well. Under these circumstances he trusted the House would agree to the second reading.

Mr. COMPTON said, he knew several individuals possessed of twelve, others eight, six, or four of these houses, which at present were all exempted from rates. These facts showed that there ought to be some alteration in this part of the law. The hon. and learned Member for Southampton said that this Bill would prove a great hardship to the poor. He thought it would be the very opposite; as it would, by bringing in this new class of rate-payers, relieve those who were only a little way above them in the social scale, and who now felt the pressure of the poor-rates very severely.

Mr. P. SCROPE suggested the suspension of this and other Bills of a similar nature, until Parliament should have had an opportunity to consider the general principle. There were hundreds of thousands of persons in the country excused at this moment from rates by reason of their poverty; and it would be too hard if a particular piece of legislation should be the means of including these persons.

Mr. HUME said, that there was no doubt the poor-rates fell very heavily on small proprietors. Parliament ought to hold out, by every means in its power, inducements to those poorer classes to pay the rates, in order that they might enjoy the franchise. The area of representation ought to be increased, not diminished. On that ground he submitted that this mode of legislating to serve the purposes of any particular party was bad. They ought not to take away from the poor man any inducement to pay his rate.

Mr. GODSON said, the argument of the hon. Member for Stroud was equally good in 1831; but the Government brought in no general measure on the subject. The principle worked well in Kidderminster; and he could assure the hon. Member for Montrose that it extended, rather than abridged, the franchise. The Kidderminster Bill reserved the rights of the occupant in that respect, at the same time compelling the landlord to pay the rates. In that borough 1,370*l.* more, or one-fifth of the whole poor-rate, was collected now in that borough, than before the passing of the measure; all classes being, therefore, relieved to that extent. As a matter of justice to all parties, he thought the Bill before the House should be passed. The principle had worked so well in the borough of Kidderminster, that there was now a Bill before Parliament to apply its provisions to the whole union.

Mr. HENLEY agreed that if all parties in the town were willing to come to an arrangement of this sort, there was no reason why they should not be accommodated; but where there was a difference of opinion in a town, he could not but regard this as one of a series of steps by which the Legislature sought to deprive the poor man of the humane provision, that, as a poor man, he should be exempt from the payment of poor-rates. The law of England at present was, that the rate was collected from the occupier: there must be a beneficial occupancy. This was an attempt to shift it on the property. How it might work as to the franchise he knew not, The objection which he had always taken to Bills of this description, unless they were by common consent, was, that you deprived the poor man of the advantage which the humanity of the law had conferred upon him, that he should not be rated, if his neighbours agreed in vestry that he was too poor to pay his rates.

Mr. SPOONER denied that this would be the effect of the Bill; and he alleged that he had seen the working of a similar measure in Birmingham for more than twenty years, and it had worked very well; the result had been greatly to relieve the poor, and at the same time largely to increase the amount actually received from the rates. At present, parties realised large rentals from numbers of small houses in respect of which no rates were paid; but, in effect, the rent was proportionably increased.

Mr. MUNTZ said, there was no clause in the Bill to enable the landlord to compound for the rate. The principle was a most dangerous one, especially on the score of the length to which it was carried. It would create a most extensive disfranchisement, and therefore he should oppose it.

Question put, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes 64; Noes 106: Majority 42.

List of the Ayes.

Arundel and Surrey, Earl of
Bagshaw, J.
Baines, M. T.
Bennet, P.
Blair, S.
Bowles, Adm.
Bramston, T. W.
Brown, W.
Bruce, Lord E.
Bruce, C. L. C.
Buxton, Sir E. N.
Carter, J. B.
Clerk, rt. hon. Sir G.
Clive, H. B.
Cobbold, J. C.
Coles, H. B.
Cubitt, W.
Currie, H.
Dod, J. W.
Douro, Marq. of
Duncombe, hon. O.
Ebrington, Visct.
Egerton, Sir P.
Ellice, rt. hon. E.
Fuller, A. E.
Godson, R.
Greene, T.
Heneage, G. H. W.
Heyworth, L.
Hildyard, R. C.
Hodgson, W. N.
Hope, Sir J.
Hornby, J.
Howard, Lord E.
Jackson, W.
Lacy, H. C.
Langston, J. H.
Lemon, Sir C.
Lewis, rt. hon. Sir T. F.
Lewis, G. C.
Mahon, The O'Gorman
Masterman, J.
Miles, P. W. S.
Miles, W.
Neeld, J.
Newport, Visct.
Packe, C. W.
Renton, J. C.
Rufford, F.
Scott, hon. F.
Seymer, H. K.
Slaney, R. A.
Smith, rt. hon. R. V.
Spooner, R.
Stanley, E.
Thicknesse, R. A.
Tyrell, Sir J. T.
Vane, Lord H.
Waddington, D.
Walter, J.
Wellesley, Lord C.
Wilson, J.
Wrightson, W. B.
Young, Sir J.

TELLERS.

Mackinnon, W. A.
Compton, H. C.

List of the Noes.

Abdy, T. N.
Adair, R. A. S.
Adderley, C. B.
Aglionby, H. A.
Anderson, A.
Armstrong, Sir A.
Baillie, H. J.
Baring, H. B.
Berkeley, C. L. G.
Blackall, S. W.
Blewitt, R. J.
Bouverie, hon. E. P.
Boyle, hon. Col.
Brocklehurst, J.
Brotherton, J.
Busfeild, W.
Childers, J. W.
Cobden, R.
Cochrane, A. D. R. W. B.
Colebrooke, Sir T. E.
Cowan, C.
Crawford, W. S.
Davie, Sir H. R. F.
Dawson, hon. T. V.
Deedes, W.
Douglas, Sir C. E.
Duncan, G.
Duncuft, J.
Dundas, Adm.
Dunne, F. P.
Ellice, E.
Ellis, J.
Evans, Sir De L.
Ewart, W.
Forster, M.
Fox, R. M.
Fox, W. J.
Gaskell, J. M.
Gibson, rt. hon. T. M.
Grattan, H.
Greene, J.
Grenfell, C. W.
Grey, R. W.
Hallyburton, Lord J. F.
Hardcastle, J. A.
Harris, R.
Hastie, A.
Heathcoat, J.
Henley, J. W.
Hill, Lord M.
Hindley, C.
Hobhouse, T. B.
Horsman, E.
Hume, J.
Keppel, hon. G. T.
Kershaw, J.
Kildare, Marq. of
King, hon. P. J. L.
Lascelles, hon. W. S.
Lindsay, hon. Col.
Lushington, C.
Maitland, T.
Matheson, Col.
Maule, rt. hon. F.
Milnes, R. M.
Moffatt, G.
Monsell, W.
Morris, D.
Muntz, G. F.
Napier, J.
Norreys, Lord
Nugent, Lord
Nugent, Sir P.
O'Connor, F.
Ord, W.
Osborne, R.
Palmerston, Visct.
Pendarves, E. W. W.
Pilkington, J.
Raphael, A.
Repton, G. W. J.
Reynolds, J.
Ricardo, J. L.
Rich, H.
Russell, F. C. H.
Scholefield, W.
Scrope, G. P.
Simeon, Lord
Smith, J. B.
Somerville, rt. hn. Sir W.
Stansfield, W. R. C.
Staunton, Sir G. T.
Sullivan, M.
Tenison, E. K.
Thompson, Col.
Thompson, G.
Thornely, T.
Townshend, Capt.
Tufnell, H.
Villiers, hon. C.
Wall, C. B.
Williams, J.
Willyams, H.
Willoughby, Sir H.
Wilson, M.
Wood, W. P.

TELLERS.

Cockburn, A. J. E.
Willcox, B. M.

Words added: Main question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Bill put off for six months.

EMIGRATION.

Mr. SCOTT rose to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies the questions of which he had given notice relative to emigration to the Australian colonies.

His reason for doing so was, because, as was well known to the hon. Gentleman, the Australian colonies had been in the habit of paying the whole cost of conveying emigrants from this country, while now they proposed paying only half, and getting the same number; and they found multitudes of persons and parishes ready to come into these terms, and get rid of their surplus population, by paying half the passage, instead of keeping them at home at a greater cost. This was what was called assisted emigration, and had been carried on to a great extent. Now, if he was correctly informed, and he believed he was, 1,000 forms for free passages, equal to 3,000 persons, and at the rate of 10*l.* per head, had been sent down to Dorsetshire, thereby saddling the colonies with the burden of 30,000*l.* for the conveyance of 3,000 instead of 6,000 persons, who might have gone under the assisted mode, and depriving 3,000 of the benefits they sought, and this at a time when the applications for assisted passages were so numerous, that between one-fourth and one-fifth of those emigrants who have been accepted on payment have to wait, while those who paid nothing were to go directly. He understood that they were not all exactly free passages, for that Dorset and Wilts were filled with families ineligible by reason of their numbers, and who were allowed to pass on payment of the excess. He wished to know if that were true, and therefore asked—1. How many free passages to the Australian colonies it is the present intention of the Colonial Office to give to Dorset and Wilts? 2. Whether it is intended to do the same in other, and what counties? 3. How much these free passages will (at the average cost per head of each statute adult) cost the colony to which they go? 4. How many more emigrants might have gone if the grant had been made to assisted instead of free passengers? 5. Whether it is intended that they should have the preference over previous applicants for assisted passages, and sail shortly, while these latter are detained? 6. The amount of colonial funds at present available for emigration?

Mr. HAWES replied, that with regard to the first question, it was not the intention of the Colonial Office to give to any person whomsoever any preference. The same boons would be given to all. But very recently two ships were taken up for Sydney. They were to take in emigrants at Plymouth, but very few emigrants were found ready to go. Under these circumstances, the Emigration Commissioners filled up the complements with persons from Dorsetshire and Wiltshire, who were ready. But that was not intended to be a general rule. The second question was answered by the reply he had given to the first. With regard to the third, the cost would be about fourteen guineas each. As to the fourth, it would of course be quite impossible for him to make any conjecture even as to the number who might have gone, if the grant had been made to assisted instead of free passengers. As to the fifth, he had already stated that no preference would be given, nor was any preference intended to be given. With regard to the last question, as to the funds, there were 50,000*l.* available at present, for the purposes of emigration. And unless some further remittances should take place from the colonies, that was the entire of the means at their disposal.

Mr. SCOTT: But there has been preference. One-fourth of the assisted passengers are now waiting. I wish to know whether these two counties are to have the 50,000*l.*, to the exclusion of England and Scotland? If 1,000 forms, representing 3,000 persons, had been sent to Dorset and Wilts, that would be just 42,000*l.*, and would leave only 8,000*l.* of the remaining fund for the whole of Great Britain and Ireland. He should be glad to know if any correspondence which had taken place on the subject would be laid on the table. This was the more desirable, as it might remove any suspicion that the arrangements of Government were made with a view to clear the estates of certain Gentlemen at the expense of the rest of England.

Mr. HAWES would make inquiry if there was any correspondence. He wished, however, to assure the hon. Member that no favour had been shown to any particular parties.

Subject at an end.

THE NEW HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

Mr. GREENE wished to correct an error into which he had fallen, in reply to the question of the hon. Member for Middlesex (Mr. Osborne), respecting the New Houses of Parliament. He (Mr. Greene) had stated, that some additional expenses had been incurred at the instance of the Woods and Forests; and that he had seen a return prepared by Mr. Barry, at the request of the Commissioners for building the New Houses of Parliament, in order that they might be inserted in it. He (Mr. Greene) had since been informed by the noble Earl the Chief Commissioner of the Woods and Forests that no such additional expense had been contracted for or paid for by that department.

HABEAS CORPUS SUSPENSION (IRELAND) BILL.

Order for the Third Reading read. Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the Third Time." Amendment proposed, "To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"

Mr. J. O'CONNELL said, that as the noble Lord the Member for Aylesbury (Lord Nugent) had given notice of his intention to move an Amendment after the third reading, he (Mr. O'Connell) would not trouble the House with two debates in one night on this Bill, but would be content with one debate upon the Amendment of the noble Lord.

Mr. F. O'CONNOR said, he was not prepared to allow this Bill to proceed to a third reading without giving the Motion every opposition in his power. If hon. Members acknowledged the principle of the Bill, they would not be in a position to support the Amendment. Among other hon. Members, he found that the hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume) gave as a reason for supporting this Bill, that the Government would eventually be compelled to introduce some remedial measures for Ireland; and, according to his characteristic consistency, the hon. Gentleman declared his belief that that Government, who had made so many fair promises, and had broken them, would now perform them. Those who supported the present supporters of this measure affected to condemn the practice of yielding to a pressure from without. But who, he would ask, had so practically displayed that feeling as the men who were now in power? Experience had shown that whenever remedial measures for Ireland were suggested, there was always some difficulty to contend with in that House; but when coercive measures were proposed, there then appeared a general concurrence in any attempt to circumscribe the liberties of the people of Ireland. Thus when there was a debate coming on upon the Southampton Small Tenements Bill, there was a very full House; but when that discussion was over, and the division taken on such a Bill, the House was immediately closed, as if by magic. Was the letter of the Earl of Clarendon the indictment upon which the case of the rights of the people of Ireland was to be tried? The noble Earl had stated, that when he was obliged to apply to Parliament for this Bill, the effect had been to ensure tranquillity, and had excited universal joy throughout the country. If such were the case, upon what could the noble Earl base his appeal to the country? The noble Earl had been emphatically addressed, and had received from the corporation of Dublin the most fervent congratulations upon the perfect restoration of tranquillity to the country. Every count, then, in the indictment answered itself. The Earl of Clarendon said, that his object was to put a stop to that system of agitation which, for a period of thirty-nine years, had prevented the influx of capital, and had paralysed industry. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Ireland (Sir W. Somerville), whose whole argument was based on a quibble and juggle, said that the letter of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland had no reference to the repeal of the Union agitation. What system of agitation had been carried on in Ireland, regularly and systematically, for the last thirty years, but agitation for the repeal of the Union? ["Question, question!" *and* "Time, time!"] He knew well that the noble Lord at the head of the Government wished to bring on the Jewish Disabilities Bill to-night; and many hon. Gentlemen were doubtless anxious that the present discussion should be brought to a close. [*Loud cries of* "Hear!"] These cheers, then, showed him that more importance was attached by the House to the Jewish question than to the Irish question. But Ministers had always either made Ireland their battle-field, or neglected and misgoverned her. He recollected that the noble Lord, in introducing the Jewish measure last year, had asked, why not admit to the House those who bore the burdens of the country? why should not those who bore those burdens have a portion of the honours? He again asked the House whether they were going to pass this Bill upon the indictment of Lord Clarendon, which was contradictory in every count, and answered itself? But he considered it his duty to take care, as an Irishman having all his life struggled for the emancipation of his country, that no assault should be made upon her liberties whilst he sat silent in that House. If, after the convulsions of March last—and during the Chartist movement—the Government turned out 200,000 military and "specials," and placed the Duke of Wellington at the head of the Army, without calling for a suspension of the constitution, that fact showed that with the watchful eye of Lord Clarendon any danger could have been foreseen and proceeded against without this violation of the constitution, especially where the people were almost all dying men. He appealed to the right hon. Baronet (Sir R. Peel), to whom the people of England and Ireland looked to remove the evils of misgovernment in Ireland, though that right hon. Baronet was about to vote in favour of this measure. All Irish Members were not chargeable with proposing nothing to relieve the people of Ireland. On whatever side of the House he had sat, he had always opposed that agitation which was capable of giving patronage whilst the Whigs were in power. Why did not the Government at once turn their mind upon the Irish landlords? Why? Because they were afraid of them. When the Government talked of giving to Ireland remedial measures, he would ask what those remedial measures were to be? The land was not half cultivated, and there was no provision for the cultivation of the soil. The effect of this Bill would be, not only to stop agitation for the repeal of the Union; but he would ask where, after the passing of this Bill, would be found the man who would dare to agitate, even for his own rights, for his own liberty, or even for justice to himself? Not a man in Ireland would dare to do so. And this was the people from whom loyalty was expected. Now, he would ask, where the loyalty of the landlord would be presently? Where would be the loyalty of the Protestant landlords of the north, now that it was proposed to lay on them an additional tax? It was well to talk of loyalty; but it would be impossible to procure it without doing justice to the great mass of the people. If the Government wished to preserve the loyalty of the Irish people, they must allow them to discuss those measures which they understood better than the Government. He knew the discussion of the question was distasteful to those who had made up their minds, but it was his intention to oppose the Bill as far as he could; and he would ask those hon. Gentlemen who had rejected the leadership of the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth, whether they hoped to sustain their position in the country by their acquiesence in Irish Coercion Bills. He (Mr. O'Connor) would tell them they would come back to the right hon. Baronet: when they were at sea again without a helm or a helmsman they would say to the right hon. Baronet—"For God's sake take us back again; we are worse off than we were before; we see the folly of our ways—we have no one to oppose the tyranny of a Government, and who is capable of carrying out those healing measures which ought to have followed the repeal of the corn laws!" He asked every independent Member to stand up and oppose the present Bill. Would they tolerate such an infraction of the English constitution as to allow men, without the semblance of a charge against them, and when perfect tranquillity prevailed in Ireland, to be treated like those unfortunate men who had been imprisoned at Kilmainham, and who, because one of them complained of his treatment had been removed from the marshalsea to the criminal side of the prison? The noble Lord opposite (Lord J. Russell), was going to act on the maxim of Robespierre, and to control the clergy by attaching them to the State. But did the noble Lord hope by endowing the Catholic Church to completely silence that revolution which the late Mr. C. Buller said would be incipient as long as Mr. O'Connell lived, but would ultimately break out? He (Mr. F. O'Connor) said it could not be done. Let them talk of loyalty, but if the struggle came between the Celt and the Saxon, he would rather be found dead among the slaves than alive among the conquering army. Did the Government suppose that America or France would allow them to tyrannise over Ireland, whilst absolute Governments were extending their constitutions and giving the people those rights which they had too long withheld? Let them remember that Ireland was not Poland. Ireland was their superior, and it would be happy for Ireland if she was under half as humane a despotism as Poland. [*A laugh.*] Hon. Gentlemen might laugh, but he would ask did they ever hear of a million of human beings dying in Poland in one year? The Government would goad and drive Ireland to fury. It was true the people of Ireland were weak, famished, and hungered; but it was also true that famished and hungry men on becoming discontented became disloyal men; and men who were disloyal soon became dangerous men. He would now, with the permission of the House, read a few extracts—[*Cries of* "No, no!"] —and then conclude. Who said "No?" Would the hon. Member who said "no" like to read them himself? He could easily do so, for they were written in a plain hand. The extracts to which he referred were the opinions of Lord John Russell on the British constitution, Blackstone, Hallam, and Bolingbroke. If "no, no" meant that these extracts were not to be read, that would not prevent him from quoting them; but if the hon. Member meant they should be read by the clerk, he was quite content. The reading would not occupy six minutes. [Sir G. GREY: You have already exceeded an hour.] The right hon. Baronet reminded him that he had already occupied the attention of the House for upwards of an hour. It might be so; but he had been compelled to enter fully into the question in consequence of the meagre speech with which the right hon. Baronet had introduced the measure. [The hon. and learned Gentleman then read extracts from Blackstone, Hallam, Bolingbroke, and from Lord John Russell's *Essay on the English Constitution*, all tending to show the value of the Habeas Corpus Act.] The Habeas Corpus Act was the greatest of those laws, and afforded the best security for the liberty of the subject which had been devised; but it must not be supposed that it was invented during that reign. Dr. Johnson, also, had declared that it was in the Habeas Corpus Act that the people of this country possessed the single advantage over those of other countries. When he (Mr. O'Connor) was in York Castle himself, on a political charge, the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) had not condescended to reply to his communications on the subject of his imprisonment; and when he was released and returned to the House, the noble Lord misrepresented the circumstances which had led to his prosecution. He would again quote the noble Lord on the English constitution, and ask the House to mark the difference between the noble Lord's reflections in his own study, and the sentiments which he now uttered with respect to suspending the liberties of Ireland. The noble Lord, communing with himself in his study, had declared that although a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act might be fairly put in force against the leaders of a conspiracy, it would afford no remedy against some thousands of discontented and unemployed workmen. Would the noble Lord now say that this measure was necessary for suppressing a few dangerous men? The hon. and learned Member next, amid loud cries of "time," read an extract relative to the impolicy of suspending the Act, from Lord Bolingbroke, and said that if the House manifested its impatience again, he would read one of Fox's speeches for them. He reminded hon. Members that the reason alleged for the suspension of the Act no longer existed, the state of Ireland at present being perfectly tranquil. He believed the Whigs had done more to violate the constitution, and destroy the rights of the people, than any other party. They had done their best to destroy one estate of the realm. From 1688 to 1788, there had been been a creation of only 86 Peers. From 1788 to 1818, 106 Peers were created; and, at the time of the Reform Bill, during the nine years that the Whigs were almost constantly in power, they had created no fewer than 82 Peers in order to swamp the House of Lords. He hoped they would be vigorously opposed in their present attempt: at all events, if others stood aloof from the contest, he (Mr. O'Connor), for one, would take his stand by the side of Irish liberties, support conscientiously his own opinions, and promote the cause of justice and of God. Believing the present Bill unconstitutional and unjust, he should give his vote against its passing into a law.

SIR G. GREY said, that perhaps he owed some apology to the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down, for having reminded him some twenty minutes ago that he had then spoken an hour. The hon. and learned Gentleman appeared displeased at having been informed that he was an hour on his legs; but he had spoken now for nearly an hour and a half, and he had occupied twenty-five minutes after saying he was only going to occupy six minutes. Now, on referring to the list of the minority on the 6th of February, the name of the hon. Gentleman would be found voting on the Motion for limiting the discussion to one hour. [Mr. F. O'CONNOR: But you voted against it, and I was anxious to take your example.] If anything could convince him (Sir G. Grey) of the necessity of limiting the addresses in that House, it would be the speech they had just heard; because if all the extraneous matter it contained had been expunged, it would have been a more effective and a far better speech than it was. He knew not that it was necessary at present to prolong the discussion, because the hon. Member for Limerick had thrown out a suggestion which seemed to meet with the acquiescence of the House—namely, to take the debate on the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Aylesbury after the third reading of the Bill, those Members who dissented from its provisions now recording their protest against it. If that course were adopted, there would be another opportunity of speaking on the question, and Her Majesty's Ministers could then defend the line of conduct they had thought proper to pursue. The hon. and learned Member for Nottingham might have spared himself all the trouble of reading the extracts relative to the constitutional value of the Habeas Corpus Act. Nobody doubted the value to be attached to the provisions of that Act; but the hon. and learned Member must know that the greatest constitutional authorities had held that occasions might exist when, in order to preserve the constitution, it would be necessary to suspend that Act. An extract had been quoted from the Essay of his noble Friend at the head of the Government, in which it was contended that it was not the object of the suspension of the Act to interfere with any persons except the leaders of an insurrection, who were plotting against the State, and deluding victims to their ruin. Why, it was precisely with that object in view, last year, that the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act had been proposed; and if those authorities which were read, as to the value of the Habeas Corpus Act, were to prevail against the general proposition now made to suspend it, the House must recollect that they were of equal force last year to what they were now. The Act had not been enforced against hundreds and thousands of persons in Ireland. It had been enforced against the leaders and instigators of the insurrection; and the House had now by repeated divisions affirmed that this was not the moment when the powers entrusted to the Government by the Suspension Act could be safely withdrawn. Believing that that decision would not now be altered, he hoped the House would consent to the third reading, and proceed afterwards with the debate on the Amendment.

Mr. E. B. ROCHE said, that as an Irish Member he must decline to enter into any understanding with the Government with respect to his opposition to this Bill. There was nothing in the speech of the right hon. Baronet who had just sat down to show that it was necessary any further to suspend the liberties of the Irish people. He had complained throughout these discussions that the Government had not advanced a single satisfactory reason for this measure; indeed to any set of men so utterly bankrupt in excuses for the proposal to suspend the constitution of Ireland, it had never been his misfortune at any former period to have to listen. The Government proposed coercion; but he should like to know how the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) would gild the bitter pill? It might be said, with confidence, that, as far as remedies were concerned, the noble Lord had proposed absolutely nothing. It was true there was a Franchise Bill, but that was all. Out of doors, indeed, there were rumours of some reforms in the poor-law system in Ireland; but if the measures so indicated were the measures intended by the noble Lord, he (Mr. Roche) confessed that he could only regard them with pain and disappointment. The noble Lord had said that England and Ireland were one; but the noble Lord proposed to throw upon the funds of Ireland, and not upon the imperial funds, the charge for the support of the poor of Ireland. But if the Government were not disposed to assist Ireland, still less so was the party on the opposite side of the House. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Buckinghamshire (Mr. Disraeli), the leader of the protectionists, had indicated the course he would pursue if he should come into power. The hon. Gentleman said he would not allow the Irish people the franchise, and would forbid them to lay their hands on the Protestant Church in that country. That hon. Member, therefore, was not prepared with any course to raise Ireland from her miserable and degraded position. Then there was another party, led by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth. That right hon. Gentleman had told the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell), that he had nothing prepared; that Ireland had always been his difficulty; and that we must wait and take the chance of events. Now what did "waiting for events" mean? The noble Lord had spoken of Ireland tiding over her difficulties; but waiting for events meant waiting until the potato, that root which had been the curse of Ireland, grew again—waiting for the reappearance in abundance of that food which had been at the bottom of Ireland's misfortunes. Save him from your potato statesmen! Ireland could not be governed on the conacre system. Then there was another party on the Opposition side of the House, who put forward their panacea for the relief of Ireland. Now, that party was represented by the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. Monsell); they proposed limitation of taxation to townlands, and the promotion of emigration. The meaning of all which is, "Go to the poor-house or the transport." Now, if these Gentlemen carried out their principles, the Celtic population would be exterminated. They might have fat oxen and grass lands, but the original inhabitants would be in America, there to become the greatest enemies of the people of this country. A headlong system of emigration would not cure a starving people: a quarter of the national debt would not emancipate them. The free-traders in that House, also, whilst they were prepared to govern Ireland by coercion, were utterly bankrupt with respect to the suggestion of remedial measures. The Government were ready with a palliative, miserable though it was; but the free-traders refused to disburse a sixpence for Ireland. He threw out the challenge to the free-trade Gentlemen in that House, which they were so fond of flinging in the face of the protectionists, when the former were discussing corn-law repeal in their free-trade halls. He called upon the free-traders to discuss this question of Ireland with him, a humble Irishman, and he should be prepared to show that she had been misgoverned by this country from beginning to end. He would ask the hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume) this question—Was there upon the face of the whole earth anything so anomalous as that they should have at this moment in Ireland the poorest, most miserable, and most degraded population existing, in contrast with the richest, most luxurious, and rampant religious institution in the world, taking its extent and limits into account? The people were actually dying of starvation by hundreds and thousands in the villages and towns, while the bishops of the Protestant establishment were dying in the greatest opulence, leaving their hundreds of thousands sterling behind them to their relatives. That gross and intolerable monopoly stood at the head and front of Ireland's grievances. How, then, if such were the case, could the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hume) reconcile with justice his support of coercion towards the Irish people, and thereby practically preventing them from agitating for the redress of such a grievance? Why did hon. Gentlemen sit quietly there and neglect to reform the Irish Church, which they admitted themselves to be so offensive to the Irish people, while they were so ready to support the suspension of the liberties of an oppressed people? It was hardly necessary for him (Mr. Roche) to argue the Irish Church question in that House—nobody attempted to defend it by argument; it was like these coercive measures, for no rational grounds could be offered why it should be maintained. Then, with regard to another point, a great deal of claptrap was used out of doors with respect to the social and political rights of Ireland. For his (Mr. Roche's) part, he thought it a hard matter to define where the social part of the subject ended, and the political branch of it began. In Ireland they had a country possessing by nature the richest soil in the world, and yet that country was inhabited by the poorest and most helpless population. Their duty as practical men, was, to bring that rich soil and the poor people together, which they never had done, and never would do until they were bold enough to give up their squeamishness about what was called the rights of property, and passed a sound, practical, comprehensive, and sweeping measure, regulating the tenure of land in Ireland. They ought to do this without thinking themselves bound to apply the same principles to Ireland, because the circumstances of the two countries in this respect were widely different, and therefore did not call for exactly the same remedies. The Government had done nothing yet to meet the question of the tenure of the land practically—they had allowed the system of extermination to go on; they had done nothing to encourage the landlords to give leases to their tenants—indeed, they had gone further, for they had actually discouraged the landlords from doing so, for the landlords being Protestants, and the tenants generally being Catholics, they had based the franchise upon tenure, and thereby held out premiums to those proprietors who differed in religion from their tenants to withhold leases. Looking at Ireland financially, too, there was much room for retrenchment, and the savings might be judiciously applied to develop the resources of the country. First, they had a mock Court in Dublin to keep up; and he should like to know what good it had ever done to Ireland? A country governed on good representative and constitutional principles would be far better without any such travestie of monarchy, which, if persisted in in any other country but Ireland, would have been swept away by the people to be supplanted by a republic. They set up as viceroy a man who, potentially, was neither fish, flesh, nor fowl—neither a despot altogether, nor a responsible governor. That source of expenditure ought to be dried up for the public advantage. Then there was a million and a quarter sterling levied and spent in Ireland on grand juries—a parcel of irresponsible men who were no longer of any use, and ought to be dispensed with. It was true they had many good roads in Ireland, but the funds for making them were grossly maladministered and mis-spent; because what a board of guardians paid 100*l.* for, the grand juries often wasted 500*l.*, and even 1,000*l.*, for. He (Mr. Roche) thought he had shown reasons why the Irish people should be discontented; and that being so, why should Ireland, any more than any other part of the empire, have the means and right of expressing their complaints, as legal and constitutional subjects, taken from them? If the Lord Lieutenancy were abolished, perhaps the city of Dublin, which alone benefited by that useless institution, might have some cause to complain; but any loss of this kind would be made up to Dublin a hundred fold, if Her Majesty were to hold Her Court in that part of Her imperial dominions for one or two months in the year, as suited the Royal convenience; whilst at the same time the loyalty and good feeling of the Irish people at large would be strengthened and encouraged. But leaving that rather delicate subject, he would ask why was it that almost all parties—the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire (Mr. Disraeli) and his Friends, the Irish Members opposite, and the free-traders—differing as they did from each other upon almost every other subject that came under their notice, all seemed united for the purpose of oppressing Ireland? Did they expect to tranquillise Ireland by such a policy as this, or render life or property safer through its means? They never could, as they never ought to be able to tranquillise Ireland by coercion and brute force. The middle of the 19th century was not a time when they could hope to succeed by any such measures. The noble Lord at the head of the Foreign Office (Viscount Palmerston) had it made matter of complaint against him, that he had acted as the general liberator of Europe; but he (Mr. Roche) did not find fault with him; but, on the contrary, approved of his conduct in helping other nations to vindicate and achieve their liberties and their rights. But the Government that had assisted the Lombards by its advice, and encouraged them to shake off the iron yoke of Austria—the Government that had aided to unfurl the flag of a republic to flaunt amid the breezes of the Adriatic—the Government that had aided and encouraged Sicily to defend her just rights, and seek the repeal of the union between herself and Naples—that Government which claimed to be the followers of Hampden and Fox, and the admirers of the illustrious Canning, ought not surely to falsify their character and mar their consistency by clothing with irresponsible power a despot in Ireland, or by perpetuating the unhappy and accursed reign of despotism in that unfortunate country, which remained a scandal and a stigma upon the British name among all civilised nations.

Mr. J. H. HAMILTON wished to make some explanations relative to the statement which had been made as to the treatment of Mr. Meaney, one of the State prisoners in Kilmainham gaol. Meaney had been placed at first upon the debtors' side of the prison; but owing to breaches of prison discipline—the publication of documents from Mr. Meaney in the newspapers—the high sheriff, backed by the board of superintendence, remonstrated with him. Meaney set those authorities at defiance, and he was accordingly removed to that part of the prison allotted to felons, and where originally he ought to have been placed, and where, if he had been confined in the first instance, no such breach of prison discipline would have occurred. As Meany refused to pass from one part of the prison to the other voluntarily, the police were called in, and he was removed with great difficulty. It had been alleged that this prisoner was immured in dark, damp, unwholesome cells, and that he was refused all intercourse with his friends. As to the latter part of the charge, they must all know that it was necessary to keep up the rules of discipline, and in conformity with this rule nobody was admitted to see Maaney, except with an order; but as to the former part, that the prisoner was confined in dark, damp, unwholesome cells, he could himself give it a flat denial. The place in which he was confined was airy and wholesome. He had within the last three weeks visited the gaol, and saw Meaney sitting by a good fire, in a light, airy room, with as much of pen, ink, and paper before him as would satisfy even the hon. Gentleman who complained of his treatment. As to the measure before the House, he begged to thank the Government for bringing it forward; and he only regretted that, instead of asking its operation for a period of six months, they had not called upon the House to pass it for twelve months at least.

Mr. HUME said, that a large portion of the speeches of the hon. Members for Cork and Nottingham had been directed to him, as if either he was the oppressor, or had the power of remedying the evils of which they complained, and as if he had directed, or had the power of directing, the policy of the British Government towards Ireland. It was quite true, that for him to advocate the suspension of the Habeas Corpus was an extraordinary thing. He appealed to his past Parliamentary conduct, extending, as it did, over a quarter of a century; he appealed to those who then sat with him on the Opposition, and some of whom were now on the Treasury benches, whether any man had been more anxious, or had proved himself more sincere in his desire to redress the social and political grievances of Ireland? More than five-and-twenty years ago he submitted to the House a proposition for bestowing civil rights upon Irishmen, of all classes and creeds, equal to those of England and Scotland. He would quote an extract from a speech of his own (as reported in *Hansard*) made in 1824, in which he stated that there was no example of any country being in so lamentable a state as Ireland under the British Government. He called the attention of the House at the same time to the anomalous state in which the religious institutions of that country were, whilst his own countrymen had, by the claymore, established freedom of religious opinion. He asked the House of Commons to give the same privileges to Ireland as to Scotland and to England, and to remedy the monster grievance of her Church Establishment; and he predicted that as long as he lived they would never see any real amelioration of the social state of Ireland, whilst that Church existed in its then and present shape. In 1824, when he made that speech, they were sending out of the country 30,000,000*l.* to be employed in foreign lands, whilst not a shilling could find its way to Ireland; and he declared that it was hopeless to expect any real improvement there whilst 700,000 or 800,000 of the population were enjoying immunities and privileges which were denied to 7,000,000*l.*, who were, in fact, the slaves of the minority. That was what he then stated, and he still maintained it. At the Union the British Government and Parliament pledged itself to give equal rights to all creeds and classes, and to treat Ireland as an integral part of the united kingdom. She had never been so treated—that pledge had never been redeemed. There were still the grand jury laws and the Established Church to render the people discontented and unhappy. Undoubtedly English misgovernment had been the bane of Ireland. Until they rendered to her justice—and by that term he meant placing her on the same level as Scotland and England, both as regarded religious and civil institutions—there never would be any lasting tranquillity. Was it not a startling, a disgraceful, fact, that amongst the poorest peasantry in the world—in the most miserable and wretched country—three Primates of the Irish Established Church should at their demise leave in the aggregate no less a sum than 800,000*l.*, having when they succeeded to the bishoprics no property? Was it to be wondered at, that with such grievances agitation should have existed? He did not say agitation was wrong—they had not been able even in England to obtain much without agitation, and in Ireland nothing. He blamed the Government for not bringing forward remedial measures; and now that their difficulties were cleared away, he expected they would do so. He did not hesitate to say that, as long as agitation existed in Ireland, no Government could bring in remedial measures. Ireland was now, however, declared to be in a state of perfect tranquillity. They had the assurance of the hon. Member for Limerick that he would agitate; but he would readily give his vote to keep the hon. Gentleman quiet; and considered that, so far from oppressing Ireland by so doing, he was performing an act of mercy both to the hon. Gentleman and to his country. He was desirous of freeing Ireland from the influence of wicked men, who had done her so much mischief. He had always found that in every part of the world he had visited, he saw Irishmen as industrious, active, and orderly as any other people, and that oppression had been the cause, and was still the cause, of their being otherwise at home. He agreed with the hon. Member for Limerick, that some change must take place in the relations between landlord and tenant, and that security must be given to the investment of capital. He would conclude by again calling upon the Government to bring in comprehensive and remedial measures for Ireland. The hon. Member for Cork had asked him (Mr. Hume) to declare the grounds upon which he supported the present Bill; it was this, that his vote in favour of the Bill would keep his hon. Friend the Member for Limerick, and such restless persons, quiet. In mercy to his hon. Friend, and to those by whom he was supported, he would record his vote on the side of the Government.

MR. NAPIER had not intended to take any part in this debate, because upon the immediate question before the House—the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act—he did not think any doubt could exist as to the propriety of continuing the measure in the present condition of Ireland. Only last week seventeen clubs had met in secret conclave in Dublin. This was sufficient reason why they should entrust to the Lord Lieutenant these powers, which he was equally satisfied would not be abused. Therefore, he (Mr. Napier) would have been quite content to give his vote without offering any observations, because he never wished to obtrude himself upon the House except when a sense of duty compelled him to do so. But, after the challenge made that night with regard to the Irish Established Church by the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Roche), he felt called upon, as one of the representatives of that church, to rise and meet that challenge with as much boldness and firmness as it had been given. He never wished to be ostentatious of his religion, but he trusted he should never be the man to be ashamed of it. He was ready to meet the challenge against that church upon every ground—upon the ground of its antiquity, the truth of its doctrine, as being conformable with Scripture—the correctness of its discipline—the unbroken succession of its spiritual leaders from the earlier ages down to the present times—all its long catalogue of bishops, many eminent for their piety and their learning, could trace their descent from the days of St. Patrick. Let hon. Gentlemen of the opposite persuasion remember the solemn oath by which they bound themselves on taking their seats in that House. They therein declared that they "disclaimed, disavowed, and solemnly renounced and abjured, any intention or design to weaken or subvert the present Protestant Church in Ireland by law established." The Irish Church was agreed to be maintained inviolate and intact by the Act of Union, and with that Act she must stand or fall. When the Catholic Emancipation Act was discussed in that House, it was urged against it that the privileges it proposed to confer upon Roman Catholics would be used to subvert the Irish Church; and pledge after pledge, and declaration after declaration was made that no such intention was entertained by that body; and it had been thought proper to frame the oath to which he had just referred, as a greater safeguard and security to the Protestant Establishment in Ireland. He (Mr. Napier) upheld the creed of that church, on which his humble but immortal hope depended. He admitted that others differed with him; but let them show him one point of toleration upon which their liberty was pressed, and he (Mr. Napier) would help to remove their ground of complaint. Nine-tenths of the property of Ireland belonged to Protestants, and support for the church was a tax on property—no personal tax was exacted in Ireland from any man to pay for a religion of which he did not approve; save and except, indeed, so far as funds were regularly taken from the national Exchequer to keep up Maynooth, and for other similar matters. There was a charge on the property, and those who took that property surely ought not to refuse to pay their creditor what they had engaged to pay him merely because he differed in religion. But he would go from the south to the north of Ireland, and trace in all its territorial extension the benefits and advantages of Protestantism. He found it foster no sedition or insurrectionary spirit; and in Protestant Ulster in particular, prosperity, industry, and every blessing that gave temporal and spiritual happiness to man reigned co-extensively with that Protestantism, which contained the germs of everything that could make a people prosper for time and for eternity. Upon all these grounds, then, he based his case for the maintenance of the inviolate integrity of the Protestant Establishment of Ireland; and if these were not sufficient to convince the hon. Gentleman who had thrown down the challenge (Mr. Roche), he (Mr. Napier) could not hope to convince him by detaining the House by making a much more lengthened speech.

Mr. J. O'CONNELL would ask the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down, what the incendiary fires and disturbances now going on in the north of Ireland, meant? If these acts of devastation and lawlessness could not be called sedition, they could not, at all events, be considered to be very striking evidences of the love of peace and order which the hon. and learned Gentleman had so triumphantly arrogated to himself, as being characteristics exclusively confined to the Protestant districts of Ireland. The freedom from sedition that marked these districts, was owing to the fact that justice was done to the tenant-farmers of Ulster, who had secured to them the profits of their own industry—they had it guaranteed to them that what they had sown they would be allowed to reap. This was in consequence of their enjoying tenant-right in that province. And therefore there was not that which alone had caused the agrarian outrages in the south—the plunder of the peasant by the landlord, and the carrying away by the landlord, or the landlord's agent, of the whole of the produce of the land. He (Mr. J. O'Connell) had been abused during the course of the debates on this question for making very discourteous speeches; but he thought that other hon. Gentlemen who had spoken, particularly on that night, were equally open to the same reproach. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Napier) had given them a speech on the Irish Church, the question under discussion being the suspension of the Habeas Corpus. He (Mr. J. O'Connell) would not then go into an argument with respect to the merits of the two Churches; but certainly he was a little surprised at some of the claims advanced by the hon. and learned Gentleman with regard to the antiquity of the Protestant Church, and its connexion with St. Patrick. It reminded him of an anecdote he had heard respecting an old lady, the daughter of an officer in the Irish Brigade, who resided at Boulogne. Having been asked if she were aware that St. Patrick was a native of Boulogne, she said she was not, but would not be surprised if such were the fact; because, said she, "the Irish Brigade were quartered here a long time." He (Mr. J. O'Connell) was of opinion, that there was as little connexion between the Irish Brigade and St. Patrick, as between St. Patrick and the Protestant Church. With regard to the oath taken by them in that House, and to which reference had been made by the hon. and learned Gentleman, he had merely to say that that question had been already discussed, and he hoped they would never be again obliged to have recourse, in self-vindication, to the short and simple mode in which they had before repudiated that charge. They were willing to give to every man who differed from them full credit for the purity of his conduct; and they would not allow any person to impugn the purity of their motives, or allege that they did not pay a strict regard to their oaths. As to the hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose, he must congratulate him on his love for Ireland; and the fame he had gained as the defender of Ireland, as the man who pointed out the abuses existing in Ireland, who declared what ought to be done for Ireland, and spoke against the temporalities of the Church in that country. But why did he not follow it up? Had he been the friend of Ireland only in the year 1824, and had he been since asleep? How was he now showing his friendship? At one moment he said he had been bringing forward the grievances of Ireland, and at the next moment he was giving a vote to prevent the collection of public opinion in that country against those grievances. And why did he do so? His reason for establishing this most dangerous precedent against the liberties of Ireland, and for trampling them under foot, was to put him (Mr. J. O'Connell) down. He (Mr. J. O'Connell) never thought he was a person of such extreme importance, power, and influence, that it was necessary for the purpose of crushing him to strike down the constitutional liberties of a whole country. He believed, however, there were few men in Ireland who had less influence than he had, and therefore the hon. Gentleman was fighting with a shadow when he talked of putting him down. But if anything could make him of importance in that country, or make his efforts effective and powerful, it would be the singling him out, as the hon. Gentleman had done, and the singling out of the agitation with which he was connected, as the Minister had done, and saying that to put him and that agitation down, they would have recourse to this most disastrous invasion of the constitution. The hon. Gentleman had spoken of getting rid of difficulties—he said one of his reasons for infringing on the constitution was to take difficulties out of the way, and leave Government without any excuse if they did not bring forward remedial measures. He believed he was trying to get difficulties out of the way, for he was assisting those who desired to get rid of the population of Ireland. This friend of Ireland, in the past tense, would smooth away all difficulties; but he would not vote the 50,000*l.* to sustain the starving people in that country. So far as the hon. Gentleman's vote went, they would be allowed to perish. So much for the hon. Gentleman's humanity, which seemed to be on a par with his policy, concerning Ireland. With respect to an observation made by the hon. and learned Member for Nottingham, he could assure the hon. Gentleman that if he thought he would not oppose the third reading of this Bill, he was mistaken. He had declared that he would take a division on the third reading; but as another Motion was coming on afterwards (the Motion of Lord Nugent, to limit the Bill to three months), he would, for the convenience of the House, avoid two debates. He wished that the hon. Gentleman, at an earlier period of the controversy, and at an earlier stage of the Bill, had come forward to assist him (Mr. J. O'Connell), when he was almost alone in speaking against it. And he might here observe, that whatever other persons might do with regard to the proposition of the noble Lord (Lord Nugent), he (Mr. J. O'Connell) would vote for it; because, if even one day was struck off the duration of the Bill, it would be a gain. He could not advance a single point on the part of Ireland beyond what he had advanced already to prevent this injury being inflicted upon her; but he would say with regard to England herself, they should pause on the dangerous consequences that might result to England before they gave a final vote on this Bill, and put on the records of the House of Commons that they had assented to the suspension of the dearest rights of the subject, upon the most insufficient and ludicrously contemptible ground that ever was presented by any Minister seeking to carry an unjust measure in that House, and thereby establish a precedent which he might yet deeply rue. When they saw the late Ministry going out of office, and leaving as a political legacy to their successors that full and equal justice should be done to Ireland, and when they found that that peaceful gage was taken up by the noble Lord now at the head of the Government, and his fellow Ministers, could they think that within three short years all that would be changed, and they should find themselves without one promise carried out, or one pledge redeemed? Irishmen had thought the men in office were sincere: they had been grievously mistaken. For now Ministers came down, and, flinging all their liberalism to the winds, proposed a measure of coercion far more galling than any which had preceded it. During the sixteen years he (Mr. J. O'Connell) had sat in that House, he had never felt so much the iron of slavery entering into his soul as on Friday last, when this question of coercion was hastily passed through one of its stages; while the Bill which extended to Ireland a petty relief had led to three of the closest divisions which had taken place in this Parliament. This Bill having passed the House of Commons, would be the law of the land in a few days. But what measures of relief had been granted? The 50,000*l.* would be soon exhausted; and had not the right hon. Baronet the Member for Ripon, when he gave to the Ministry the much needed assistance of himself and his Colleagues, declared that this 50,000*l.* would be the last sum to Ireland he would vote for? When that was exhausted, what was to be done? Let the House then address itself in earnest to this great question of saving the lives of the people of Ireland. They would forget everything—they pledged themselves not to utter a word of reproach with respect to all that was passed, even including this tyrannous Bill—if the Government now came forward to save the lives of those miserable people. Let the British Legislature, in a spirit of fairness, justice, and humanity towards the people of Ireland, save the lives of those who were starving, and they would bless them, notwithstanding the seven centuries of wrong, oppression, and insult for which they had too much reason to curse them.

Mr. S. CRAWFORD said, he had abstained from expressing any opinion on the various Motions which had been made during the discussion of the Bill then before them, feeling convinced that no Amendment could render useful a measure affecting so violently the liberties of the people. He retained unchanged the opinion which he entertained on the second reading, namely, that no case had been made out for the Bill, and that its effect, far from curing the evils of Ireland, would accomplish the very reverse. He feared there was too much truth in the charge brought against the English Radical party. It was painful to him to think that of those who had been the uniform supporters of English liberty, only twelve could be found to vote against the second reading. The hon. Member for Montrose had not defended himself successfully against the charges brought against him. Unfortunately the Radical party had always been found opposed to coercion when out of office, and had uniformly supported it when in power. That party was certainly entitled either to the credit or discredit of this Bill: it rested on their shoulders; for the Government who brought it forward would never have been able to carry it but for their support. The hon. Member for Montrose said his object in supporting the Bill was, to put down one particular individual; and yet he would destroy the liberties of a whole people for the sake of putting that individual down. It appeared to him to be too bad that the rights of a whole people should be sacrificed for such an object. He advocated it further, as a preliminary to remedial measures; but he did not show how the placing this power in the hands of the Irish Executive would ensure the passing of remedial measures. He had reason to expect that the free-trade Members who were about to bring forward an Amendment for reducing the duration of the Bill, would support the proposition which he was about to make. He did not thank them for the Amendment they were about to propose; because if the Bill was to be voted at all, there was no use in that limitation. If they were agreed as to the principle of the Bill, there was no use in opposing its renewal. He (Mr. S. Crawford) opposed the Bill because he did not think it would tranquillise Ireland or improve the condition of her people. The hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin said that the people of Ireland were not called upon to support a church to which they did not belong; but it would be hard to make them believe, that, when the revenues of that church were obtained from the whole of the soil of Ireland, they were not the parties who paid; and he could assure the House that they never could persuade the people that the tribute thus paid by the land was not fraudulently and unjustly extorted from them. He thought the hon. and learned Gentleman had most unfairly imputed to the difference of religion the difference of condition between the north and south of Ireland; but he forgot that in the province of Ulster the people held the land by a very different tenure, and that was one great element of their superior prosperity. He should again record his protest against the Bill by moving as an Amendment, that it be read a third time that day six months.

Question put, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question." House divided:—Ayes 117; Noes 23: Majority 94.

List of the AYES.

Abdy, T. N.
Adair, R. A. S.
Aglionby, H. A.
Arbuthnott, hon. H.
Armstrong, Sir A.
Arundel and Surrey, Earl of
Baines, M. T.
Bass, M. T.
Bellew, R. M.
Berkeley, C. L. G.
Bernal, R.
Bernard, Visct.
Bouverie, hon. E. P.
Boyle, hon. Col.
Brocklehurst, J.
Brotherton, J.
Brown, W.
Buck, L. W.
Busfeild, W.
Clay, J.
Clive, H. B.
Cowan, C.
Craig, W. G.
Crowder, R. B.
Cubitt, W.
Davies, D. A. S.
Disraeli, B.
Drumlanrig, Visct.
Drummond, H.
Duncan, G.
Duncuft, J.
Dundas, Adm.
Ellis, J.
Elliot, hon. J. E.
Estcourt, J. B. B.
Ferguson, Sir R. A.
Forster, M.
Fortescue, C.
French, F.
Goulburn, rt. hon. H.
Grace, O. D. J.
Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.
Grosvenor, Earl
Gwyn, H.
Hamilton, J. H.
Hastie, A.
Hay, Lord J.
Hayter, rt. hon. W. G.
Heathcoat, J.
Henry, A.
Heyworth, L.
Hobhouse, rt. hon. Sir J.
Hodges, T. L.
Hood, Sir A.
Hope, Sir J.
Hotham, Lord
Howard, Lord E.
Hume, J.
Humphery, Ald.
Jackson, W.
Jocelyn, Visct.
Jones, Capt.
Kildare, Marq. of
Labouchere, rt. hon. H.
Langston, J. H.
Lewis, rt. hon. Sir T. F.
Lewis, G. C.
Lockhart, A. E.
Lockhart, W.
Macnaghten, Sir E.
Macnamara, Maj.
Mahon, The O'Gorman
Maitland, T.
Mandeville, Visct.
Mangles, R. D.
Martin, J.
Matheson, A.
Matheson, Col.
Maule, rt. hon. F.
Melgund, Visct.
Milner, W. M. E.
Mitchell, T. A.
Morison, Sir W.
Mulgrave, Earl of
Newdegate, C. N.
Norreys, Sir D. J.
Nugent, Lord
Ogle, S. C. H.
Owen, Sir J.
Parker, J.
Plumptre, J. P.
Raphael, A.
Rawdon, Col.
Rice, E. R.
Richards, R.
Romilly, Sir J.
Russell, Lord J.
Russell, F. C. H.
Shafto, R. D.
Sheil, rt. hon. R. L.
Simeon, J.
Somerville, rt. hon. Sir W.
Stafford, A.
Stanton, W. H.
Strickland, Sir G.

Sutton, J. H. M.
Talfourd, Serj.
Taylor, T. E.
Thompson, Col.
Thornely, T.
Walsh, Sir J. B.
Ward, H. G.
Wawn, J. T.
Willyams, H.
Wilson, J.
Wilson, M.
Wyld, J.

TELLERS.

Tufnell, H.
Hill, Lord M.

List of the Noes.

Anstey, T. C.
Barron, Sir H. W.
Devereux, J. T.
Fagan, W.
Grattan, H.
Greene, J.
Kershaw, J.
M'Cullagh, W. T.
Meagher, T.
Moore, G. H.
Morgan, H. K. G.
Nugent, Sir P.
O'Brien, J.
O'Brien, T.
O'Connell, J.
O'Flaherty, A.
Osborne, R.
Pilkington, J.
Reynolds, J.
Roche, E. B.
Scully, F.
Sullivan, M.
Williams, J.

TELLERS.

O'Connor, F.
Crawford, W. S.

Main Question put and agreed to.

Bill read 3°.

Amendment proposed in page 2, line 8, to leave out the word "September" in order to insert the word "June."

Lord NUGENT said, he had, up to this stage of the Bill, abstained from offering any opposition to it, even by a silent vote. With more reluctance than he had ever before felt in any vote he had ever given or abstained from giving in that House, he had done so, feeling he should not be justified in refusing his assent to what Ministers, on their own responsibility, urged as a measure of absolute State necessity—a remedy, tolerable only under the most urgent State necessity, and for the shortest time during which that necessity should be pressing and manifest. But he had done so, with a predetermination to resist to the utmost so frightful a proposal as that of giving to any Government a renewed lease of arbitrary power for such a term as six months in any part of the British empire; above all, during a Session of Parliament, competent as Parliament is at any moment to renew or continue powers on fresh or continued proof of necessity. He would call the attention of the House to this, as a question of principle, whether at such a time of the Session, specially, it be fit to put aside a statute affecting the very foundations of civil liberty—to part with it, out of our own hands for such a period as six months? He would appeal to those who think a case might arise, under which it might be right even to renew such a measure, even beyond this Session—whether there be common prudence in providing that it shall come before a thinned and wearied Parliament at the very conclusion of a Parliamentary year? He would appeal to those who hoped for better things, and had a proper sense of the sanctity of the rights they were suspending—whether they would consent to place them beyond the reach of Parliament for a period of manifestly unjustifiable duration—whether Ireland should hereafter be in a state to require, or in a state not to justify, the renewal? That was the dilemma in which this proposal was placed. He was glad that the earlier discussions had been left mainly in the hands of Irish representatives—those whose country was principally, not solely, certainly, affected by this measure—a measure not to be disposed of as what was too often called a mere Irish question. It was our duty, fully as much as theirs, to guard against the infliction, for any period longer than absolutely necessary, of such a wound upon the vital functions of the constitution in any part of the British empire. If he could bring his mind to consent to all the doctrines of the Home Secretary and the Prime Minister, still he could go no further than that. But their main argument appeared to him a paralogism, as not arising out of the facts they had stated, nor having any coherence with them. The Government, at first, rested their case on not very sufficient or very intelligible grounds—the flagrancy of last year's insurrection, baffled by the extraordinary powers vested in the Lord Lieutenant, and by his prompt and prudent use of them. Small argument for renewing them now, and for six months! —the continuance of that state of insurrection, mark, being distinctly denied by the Government, both in Her Majesty's Speech from the Throne, and in their own speeches here. It then comes to this. We gave extraordinary powers at the end of last Session; the insurrection was dealt with—defeated—demolished. Continue, then, the extraordinary powers, and for six months! The disease has given way; make, then, the extraordinary and dangerous remedy the patient's daily food for half a year after the malady is subdued. "But," said the noble Lord at the head of the Government—the metaphor was the noble Lord's, not his (Lord Nugent's)—"the bloodvessel may break out afresh; keep on the bandage for six months, at the end of which Parliament will be sitting!" An alarming and painful hearing to us, on every account. We might have hoped that this "winter of our discontent" might be "made glorious summer" before that time, or at least that we should not thus early be told to prepare ourselves to sit here till September next—to watch the returning but lingering dawn of the constitution in Ireland. But they have since amended their case for this demand. It is to check the revival of political societies, and of machinations not now in activity, but which, if revived, would be dangerous to the public peace. Why, then, they have chosen just the wrong six months of the year for their measure. If we were now at the end, instead of the beginning of a Session, they might, with some propriety, come down to the House, and tell us—"At the end of last year's Session, when rebellion was menaced, you gave us a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. Rebellion has been crushed. It may be revived in the approaching autumn, the ensuing winter, nay, in the first month of the prorogation. And Ireland may be in flames before Parliament can be again assembled to meet the danger." On such a representation we might be asked to consent to six months arbitrary government in Ireland, as we did last year. But now, at the beginning of a Session, no conspiracy even alleged, Parliament sitting, and as capable as at the end of last Session to put the remedy into action in a week! It does appear they have chosen just the wrong six months of the year, during which there can be no necessity, and therefore no right, to take away, for such a period, the most sacred of all the safeguards of personal liberty to the subject—a statute on which rests, as on a main pillar, the security of the best rights that are his, under the British common law. There was a good deal in the first exception taken by the Member for Limerick, little as he (Lord Nugent) had the fortune to agree with him in his views of Irish affairs generally. "Give us power," says the Government, "by arrest and imprisonment, to prevent the public discussion of matters impracticable," or as the Solicitor General said, "tending not to proper or legitimate objects." Give power to the Executive to declare, first, what legislative measures may be deemed "impracticable," and what may be discussed as "legitimate and proper;" and give power, secondly, to imprison any man who may persist in discussing any measures it may pronounce to be the reverse—a doctrine, if good for anything, not only good for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, but conclusive against the whole spirit of the Bill of Rights. It is a weakness, perhaps the commonest in our nature, to deem only such things practicable as we may distinctly see the practicability of. Thus it might be very reasonable to doubt the practicability of the repeal of the Act of Union; or, rather, how practicable, except to the infinite prejudice of both countries, specially Ireland. But might not some other Gentleman hold a like opinion respecting the poor-laws? Certainly many Gentlemen had expressed this opinion pretty strongly with regard to reform of the representation—with regard to free trade. Nay, one might appeal solemnly to the gallant Member for Lincoln whether he would consider himself safe for one hour, if Government could act penally on their view of the practicability, the legitimacy, or propriety of his project to reduce the salaries of all the Ministers by one-half? It was said that Ireland was just now in a very peculiar and alarming position. Few can remember a time, or to have read of any time, when Ireland was not in a peculiar position. By a strange anomaly, it was a quality in Ireland that a peculiar position seemed to be her natural state. At all events, those were words stereotyped in almost every page of her history. But she was now divided, more than ever, into factions; more of them, and each contributing its spark to the general inflammation, and, worst of all, no man able to control even his own particular faction. What Ireland wants is repose. And therefore (continued the noble Lord), I am willing, not without great reluctance, to grant these powers for such time as may enable the Government to apply their remedial measures to her real grievances; till the knowledge and progress of these remedial measures shall have brought with them their healing influences, and brought the people to a disposition to be governed by hope and confidence in their Government, and not by the mere slavish sense of being under the control of a power that has no hope or confidence in them. Nor am I, I confess, without a kind of suspicion, a strong one, that by shortening the term of these powers, we may somewhat hasten the healing measures in their progress. I am willing to grant these powers till long after the season of short days and long nights shall have passed—till long after the season shall have arrived when the day shall shine for many more hours on the efforts of industry than the night shall shroud the practices of the assassin, the incendiary, or the conspirator—till you shall have seen the effect produced by the promise and advancing maturity of your healing measures on the affections of your people. But I will not be party to a measure which deals with the Habeas Corpus Act as a thing to be shelved as little matters, whether for a quarter or half a year. To subdue is one thing; to govern is another. You may subdue, but you cannot govern a portion of the British empire—God forbid you should be able to do so!—by placing it for six months aside from the influence of the British constitution. Repose from the secret infusions of agitators—cheerful repose—cheerful labour—during the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act—I do not, I cannot hope, from it. I can hope from it only a very short pause, while you are giving them proof of your good will towards them. But repose. They cannot repose in the pain, the irritation, the degradation, of this temporary excommunication from their common law and statutory rights. They would be unworthy ever again to be free men if they could. Judge from yourselves. All you can hope for is sullen inaction, restrained from outbreak, while you are giving earnest of your remedial measures. They cannot, with ready hands and light hearts, betake themselves cheerily to give effect to your objects of improvement for them. It is freedom that awakens enterprise, that excites to industry—that makes men cheerily follow the lead of their ruler. If they could meet your objects and carry them cheerily into effect, suffering under exclusion from coequality of rights with their fellow-subjects, they would be contented slaves, and unworthy ever to return to freedom. Shorten the term of exception and dishonour. Shorten the term of duress—during which no good can be done, save in giving earnest of a system of good government. I agree with the right hon. Member for Tamworth that the personal character and reputation of Lord Clarendon have little to do with this question; and, methinks, it is somewhat unworthy in the Government to lean their case upon a eulogy—to lean their case upon the character and well-deserved popularity—of their Lord Lieutenant. It is trifling, it is unworthy trifling, with such a question to say "You may trust to the discretion, firmness, and high-mindedness of Lord Clarendon not to make a captious or tyrannical use of such powers." There is no man who can rate more highly than I do the wisdom, forbearance, or humanity of Lord Clarendon, or can have a more entire sense than I have of the claims he has established for himself on the gratitude of both countries by his admirable government of Ireland. But here I have done; and I return to my position. What is doctrine to-day, becomes precedent to-morrow. To no Minister, while no rebellion is flagrant or expected, and Parliament ready here to give fresh powers on any emergency, will, I grant, arbitrary power for six months; and I, therefore, lay before you this Amendment, that, in the first clause of this Bill, lines 8 and 11, instead of the word "September," be inserted the word "June."

COLONEL THOMPSON rose to second the Amendment; and in doing so he begged to observe, that those who supported the Government in the preceding stages of the Bill were placed in such a position, that they had no alternative but to vote for the whole measure, or else lie under the suspicion of being disposed to bind the hands of the Government at a moment of great danger and uncertainty. With rebellion in Ireland, they could not adopt any course the tendency of which would be to weaken the hands of the Executive authority; they therefore took the course of not restraining the Ministers of the Crown with regard to those powers which were necessary for carrying on efficiently the government of Ireland. But in so voting with the responsible advisers of the Queen, he (Colonel Thompson) and those who thought with him wished to demonstrate that they were anxious not to permit the Executive to enjoy any power one jot beyond that which the exigency of the case rendered absolutely necessary. He)Colonel Thompson) conceived the powers to be necessary; and he consented the more readily to grant them, inasmuch as he had confidence in those to whom such powers were to be intrusted. The case would be different if authority so extensive were to be intrusted to men like Jeffries or Claverhouse; but in the manner in which similar powers had already been exercised, he perceived a strong pledge that they would in future be moderately used. Still, he saw no reason why there should not be a limitation to three months, at the end of which period the Government might ask for a renewal of the authority with which this measure invested them, provided they could then prove, as they now had proved, that there existed a necessity for such a suspension of the constitution. It had been hinted that if the conduct of the Chartists, or any other body of men, rendered such a measure necessary for England, he and his friends would find themselves placed in an embarrassing dilemma. He believed that there was little hazard of their being called upon to contend with any such difficulty. But, be that as it might, he thought upon the present occasion hon. Members might fairly be said to support the Government, even though they should vote in favour of the proposed Amendment.

Sir G. GREY said, that the noble Lord who had moved the reduction of the period for the continuance of this measure from six to three months, had said that he supported the Bill upon every one of its previous stages, because he felt convinced of its necessity, and that he, equally with the Government, desired the repose of Ireland. But the noble Lord had said that the objects for which this Bill was to be passed, might all be obtained within the short period of three months. For that opinion he had given no reasons; and if the arguments of the noble Lord had any force, they would go much beyond the conclusions which he founded upon them, and would make it necessary for the House to consider month by month or week by week whether the time had not arrived for dispensing with this measure. The noble Lord had said, that in his opinion this measure was necessary; but he would not give his consent to the continuance of this Bill for six months. It had on the other hand been made a matter of complaint, that the Government had not proposed twelve months as the duration of the measure instead of six? Upon former occasions, when the Habeas Corpus Act had been suspended, it had been for a period of twelve months; but in 1822, about the same time of year as the present proposition was made, in the beginning of February, and early in the Session of Parliament, the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended for six months, as it was considered advisable that the House should again have an opportunity of considering whether it would be necessary to continue it for a longer time. The Government had followed in the present instance the precedent for the shorter term, and had proposed six instead of twelve months, as the duration of the Bill. He thought hon. Members having repeatedly, in the divisions which had taken place in the progress of the Bill, expressed their opinion that it was necessary to extend this power for a time, in order to suppress any attempt which might be made to renew the insurrection of last year, upon the part of persons who might still entertain designs of that kind, that it would be weakening the effect of the measure, and involving the House in interminable discussions, which might be considered as disposed of for the present, and which would interfere with the discussion of other subjects of great importance, if they limited the Bill, as now proposed by the noble Lord the Member for Aylesbury. He (Sir G. Grey) hoped, therefore, that the House would consent to the adoption of the Bill as originally proposed, and negative the Amendment of the noble Lord.

Mr. REYNOLDS gave the noble Lord the Member for Aylesbury credit for his kindly feelings towards the people of Ireland in reducing the period of the Bill to three months; but the House having affirmed the principle, and the noble Lord having voted with the majority in favour of its continuance for six months, he (Mr. Reynolds) could not understand exactly the meaning of the noble Lord in now moving that it should only exist for three months. If hon. Members would adopt his advice, he would say do not vote in favour of this Amendment. He knew that an argument might probably be founded upon it, that whereas it was quite wrong to suspend the constitution for six months, but that it would be perfectly right to suspend it for three months. He advised the noble Lord to withdraw his Motion, and let the Government go the whole animal.

Mr. J. O'CONNELL said, that he had promised the noble Lord to vote for his Amendment; but after the declaration he had heard, that by voting for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland for three months, he should be supporting the principle of the Bill, he begged to decline giving any vote at all on the question.

Lord NUGENT, in reply, said, that, disliking as he did "the whole animal," he could not certainly suffer the whole animal to be in the favour of the House for six months instead of three, if he could get rid of it sooner. He, therefore, declined acceding to the recommendation of the hon. Member for Dublin.

Question put, "That the word 'September' stand part of the Bill." The House divided:—Ayes 166; Noes 11: Majority 155.

List of the AYES.

Abdy, T. N.
Adair, R. A. S.
Adderley, C. B.
Aglionby, H. A.
Anson, hon. Col.
Arbuthnott, hon. H.
Armstrong, Sir A.
Arundel and Surrey, Earl of
Baines, M. T.
Baring, rt. hn. Sir F. T.
Bass, M. T.
Bellew, R. M.
Bentinck, Lord H.
Berkeley, hon. Capt.
Berkeley, C. L. G.
Bernal, R.
Bernard, Visct.
Birch, Sir T. B.
Bouverie, hon. E. P.
Boyle, hon. Col.
Bramston, T. W.
Brocklehurst, J.
Brooke, Lord
Brotherton, J.
Brown, W.
Buck, L. W.
Busfeild, W.
Carter, J. B.
Clive, H. B.
Cochrane, A. D. R. W. B.
Cowan, C.
Craig, W. G.
Crowder, R. B.
Cubitt, W.
Currie, H.
Dashwood, G. H.
Davie, Sir H. R. F.
Davies, D. A. S.
Dick, Q.
Disraeli, B.
Drumlanrig, Visct.
Drummond, H.
Duncan, G.
Duncombe, hon. O.
Duncuft, J.
Dundas, Adm.
Du Pre, C. G.
Edwards, H.
Ellice, E.
Ellis, J.
Elliot, hon. J. E.
Estcourt, J. B. B.
Ewart, W.
Farrer, J.
Fergus, J.
Ferguson, Sir R. A.
Ffolliott, J.
FitzPatrick, rt. hon. J.
Foley, J. H. H.
Forster, M.
Freestun, Col.
Glyn, G. C.
Godson, R.
Goulburn, rt. hon. H.
Graham, rt. hon. Sir J.
Grenfell, C. P.
Grenfell, C. W.
Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.
Grey, R. W.
Grosvenor, Earl
Gwyn, H.
Hastie, A.
Hay, Lord J.
Hayter, rt. hon. W. G.
Headlam, T. E.
Heathcoat, J.
Heneage, G. H. W.
Henry, A.
Herbert, H. A.
Heyworth, L.
Hobhouse, rt. hon. Sir J.
Hodges, T. L.
Hood, Sir A.
Hope, Sir J.
Hotham, Lord
Howard, Lord E.
Hume, J.
Humphery, Ald.
Jackson, W.
Jermyn, Earl
Jolliffe, Sir W. G. H.
Keppel, hon. G. T.
Kildare, Marq. of
Labouchere, rt. hon. H.
Langston, J. H.
Law, hon. C. E.
Lemon, Sir C.
Lewis, rt. hon. Sir T. F.
Lewis, G. C.
Lockhart, A. E.
Lockhart, W.
Mackinnon, W. A.
Macnaghten, Sir E.
Macnamara, Maj.
M'Gregor, J.
Mahon, The O'Gorman
Maitland, T.
Mandeville, Visct.
Mangles, R. D.
Martin, J.
Matheson, A.
Matheson, Col.
Maule, rt. hon. F.
Maxwell, hon. J. P.
Melgund, Visct.
Mitchell, T. A.
Moffatt, G.
Moody, C. A.
Morris, D.
Mulgrave, Earl of
Mullings, J. R.
Napier, J.
Newdegate, C. N.
Norreys, Sir D. J.
O'Brien, Sir L.
Ogle, S. C. H.
Owen, Sir J.
Palmer, R.
Parker, J.
Peel, F.
Plowden, W. H. C.
Plumptre, J. P.
Prime, R.
Raphael, A.
Repton, G. W. J.
Ricardo, O.
Rice, E. R.
Romilly, Sir J.
Rushout, Capt.
Russell, F. C. H.
Seymour, Lord
Shafto, R. D.
Sheil, rt. hon. R. L.
Slaney, R. A.
Somerville, rt. hn. Sir W.
Spooner, R.
Stafford, A.
Stanton, W. H.
Strickland, Sir G.
Stuart, H.
Sutton, J. H. M.
Talfourd, Serj.
Tancred, H. W.
Thornely, T.
Thornhill, G.
Tollemache, J.
Verner, Sir W.
Verney, Sir H.
Waddington, H. S.
Walpole, S. H.
Walsh, Sir J. B.
Ward, H. G.
Watkins, Col. L.
Wilson, J.
Wilson, M.
Wyld, J.

TELLERS.
Tufnell, H.
Hill, Lord M.

List of the NOES.

Barron, Sir H. W.
Grace, O. D. J.
Greene, J.
Moore, G. H.
Nugent, Sir P.
O'Brien, T.
O'Connor, F.
Osborne, R.
Rawdon, Col.
Stuart, Lord D.
Wawn, J. T.

TELLERS.
Nugent, Lord
Thompson, Col.

Bill passed.

PARLIAMENTARY OATHS.

Motion made, and Question proposed—

"That this House will resolve itself into a Committee on the Oaths to be taken by Members of the two Houses of Parliament."

LORD J. RUSSELL rose and said: Mr. Speaker, I have risen to bring under the consideration of this House the important subject of the oaths which are required to be taken by Members of this branch of the Legislature. In the course of the last Session I had the honour of proposing, and the good fortune of carrying, a Bill for the purpose of relieving Her Majesty's Jewish subjects from the disabilities under which they now labour. That Bill was rejected and thrown out by the House of Lords; and it is now my intention to bring the subject more completely under the notice of the House, and to review the oaths that are now administered at the table and necessary to be taken. And if I should be so fortunate as to obtain the consent of the House to go into Committee on the subject, I trust I shall be permitted to bring in, as I did before, the Bill which I have to propose, and to lay the whole scheme before hon. Members. I should state, in the first place, that I do not propose to interfere with, or alter, the present form of the oath administered to Roman Catholics. The form of that oath, after having operated to the exclusion of the Roman Cataolics for 150 years, was deliberately settled in the year 1829—now twenty years ago. The Roman Catholics have since that period sat in this and the other House of Parliament after taking the oath as now framed, and although there still remained some difficulties with respect to the meaning of parts of the oath, still the House and the country in general remain satisfied that the oath is fairly taken and honestly observed. As, then, the taking of that oath accomplishes the two objects of admitting the Roman Catholics to Parliament, and of affording all the security which was desired, I do not propose now to unsettle that part of the question. But if I should ask the House to take into its consideration the other oaths which are taken by Members at the table, I think I can hardly fail in obtaining the consent of those to whom I now address myself, to agree with me in opinion that they do not accomplish the object for which they were imposed. Those oaths are not merely a declaration of opinion, but they define, or are intended as a means of defining, the duties and obligations of Members of this House. For the purpose of being qualified to perform those duties, it is now imperative on Members to take the oaths of allegiance to the Sovereign, and of adherence to the Act of Settlement of the Crown. It may be necessary to impose other engagements, upon which I will afterwards touch; but if it should be found on examination that these oaths do contain matter that is utterly unnecessary, as well as ambiguous, and imposing undue restraint upon a part of Her Majesty's subjects, which are wholly unjustifiable—if the fact on examination prove to be as I describe it, you will, probably, agree with me in considering them to be in so far defective, and that they require reconsideration with a view to their alteration. In considering these oaths I will take them in their usual order, and first draw attention to the oath of allegiance, the form of which is this:—

> "I, A B, do sincerely promise and swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Victoria."

To that form of oath I entertain no sort of objection. The next oath is that of supremacy, and I shall now ask the House to listen to Lord Edon's opinion as to the origin and purpose of this oath. In discussing the question relative to the admission of the Duke of Norfolk to the office of Earl Marshal of England, from which he had been debarred by the oath of supremacy, Lord Eldon said—

> "With respect to the oath of allegiance that is to be taken by the Duke of Norfolk as Earl Marshal, I, as a lawyer, say that oath contains all that is contained in the oath of supremacy; and I say that the oath of supremacy was added to the oath of allegiance as an explanation, and, as Sir Matthew Hale observes, was passed to unravel the errors that had crept in."

Therefore, Lord Eldon, looking to the opinion of Sir Matthew Hale, considered the oath of allegiance to possess all that was expressed in the oath of supremacy, and that it was only in consequence of a misunderstanding of the oath of allegiance that the oath of supremacy was added, in order to assure the country and the Legislature that the oath of allegiance was understood in the true sense in which it was thought to be taken. The form of the oath of supremacy is this:—

> "I, A. B., do swear that I do from my heart abhor, detest, and abjure, as impious and heretical, that damnable doctrine and position, that Princes excommunicated or deprived by the Pope, or any authority of the see of Rome, may be deposed or murthered by their subjects, or any other whatsoever."

[O'GORMAN MAHON: Hear, hear!] There can be no doubt whatever that this part of the oath of supremacy is contained in the oath of allegiance. In fact, I cannot believe that any Roman Catholic within these realms would entertain any doctrine or opinion other than the one expressed in the oath; and it is impossible that any Protestant should not maintain the oath such as he had read it. The oath then goes on to say—

> "And I do declare that no foreign prince, person, prelate, state, or potentate hath, or ought to have, any jurisdiction, power, superiority, pre-eminence or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm."

Now, it so happens that these words do give rise to doubts which are carried so far in the minds of two or three Members of the House of Lords, that on account solely of the words contained in the latter portion of the oath of supremacy they had refused to take their seats as Peers of Parliament. For my own part, I conceive that the interpretation put by Lord Clancarty on the oath, respecting which he has written a letter, is erroneous; but, at the same time, I must say that I cannot wonder much at his Lordship's interpretation. All I can imagine to be the purport of the words—

> —"no foreign prince, person, prelate, state, or potentate hath, or ought to have, any jurisdiction, power, superiority, pre-eminence, or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm"—

is that no such authority is possessed within this realm. But when the Roman Catholics assert that they understand this oath, as I am led to believe they do, to mean that no person has or ought to have any influence, power, or authority over their minds, then, as it is obvious the Pope has considerable influence over their minds, and that his decrees do affect the Roman Catholic bishops here, in Ireland, and in Scotland, why, in that sense, it cannot be said that the Pope is without spiritual and ecclesiastical authority within these realms. But, Sir, when we come to consider that part of the oath taken by the Roman Catholics which corresponds with that portion taken by Protestants, we find these words :—

> "I, A. B., swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Victoria, and that I will maintain the succession of the Crown, as established by an Act intituled 'An Act for the further limitation of the Crown, and better securing the rights and liberties of the subjects :' and that I do not believe that the Pope of Rome, or any other foreign prince, prelate, person, state, or potentate hath, or ought to have, any temporal or civil jurisdiction, authority, or power within this realm ; and that I will defend, to the utmost of my power, the settlement of property within this realm, as established by the laws ; and I do make this recognition, declaration, and promise heartily, willingly, and truly, upon the true faith of a Christian. So help me God."

Therefore, while you require of the Protestant that he shall declare that the Pope hath no "spiritual or ecclesiastical" jurisdiction, you only require of the Roman Catholic a declaration that the Pope hath no "civil or temporal" jurisdiction. Now, I think it seems to be obvious, if that is a sufficient security to be given by the Roman Catholic, who does pay spiritual obedience to the Pope, and who considers him at the head of the Church, that if this is a sufficient security from a Roman Catholic who is a Member of this House, it is quite sufficient for any Protestant to make the same declaration that the Pope has no civil or temporal jurisdiction in this kingdom. As the matter stands at present, having a jealousy with regard to Roman Catholics, we require them to make a certain declaration concerning the power and authority of the Pope, and having no jealousy with regard to Protestants, we require from them a harsher and more stringent declaration than we exact from the Roman Catholics. And yet, those words which are, as I say, totally unnecessary, which place a guard where it is not required, are those very words which have been found by some noble Lords to oppose difficulties which they think insurmountable, in the way of their sitting as Peers of Parliament, and giving advice as such to the Crown upon the grave and solemn affairs of the nation. I say, Sir, that this would be a reason, even if there should be only one person who had such a doubt, sufficient to justify us in removing that which is obviously an unnecessary security. I come next to the third oath, the oath of abjuration, which, after acknowledging the Queen as the lawful and rightful Sovereign of these realms, goes on to say—

> "And I do solemnly and sincerely declare, that I do believe, in my conscience, that not any of the descendants of the person who pretended to be Prince of Wales during the life of the late King James the Second, and, since his decease, pretended to be, and took upon himself the style and title of King of England, by the name of James the Third, or of Scotland, by the name of James the Eighth, or the style and title of King of Great Britain, hath any right or title whatsoever to the Crown of this realm, or any other the dominions thereunto belonging ; and I do renounce, refuse, and abjure any allegiance or obedience to any of them. And I do swear, that I will bear faith and true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Victoria, and her will defend to the utmost of my power against all traitorous conspiracies and attempts whatsoever which shall be made against her person, crown, or dignity. And I will do my utmost endeavour to disclose and make known to Her Majesty, and her successors, all treasons and traitorous conspiracies which I shall know to be against her person, crown, or dignity. And I do faithfully promise, to the utmost of my power, to support, maintain, and defend the succession of the Crown against the descendants of the said James, and against all other persons whatsoever; which succession, by an Act, intituled 'An Act for the further limitation of the Crown, and better securing the rights and liberties of the subject,' is and stands limited to the Princess Sophia, Electress and Duchess Dowager of Hanover, and the heirs of her body, being Protestants. And all these things I do plainly and sincerely acknowledge and swear, according to these express words by me spoken, and according to the plain common sense and understanding of the same words, without any equivocation, mental evasion, or secret reservation whatsoever."

Such is the solemn declaration which every Member makes on entering this or the other House of Parliament. But now, in considering this part of the subject, let us see how that oath arose. When the House of Hanover came to this country, and George I. was king of these realms, there was a prince professing to derive his title from King James II., calling himself King James III., and claiming the crown of this realm as a right. There was also existing at that time a party, a very considerable party, who regarded his claim as superior to that of the king upon the throne; and Parliament, therefore, thought it necessary that every person who took his seat in Parliament should take the oath of allegiance, and should, at the same time, disclaim and abjure the title of the person pretending to be the king of these realms. In the course of time James III., as he called himself, died, and the claim descended to his sons. Parliament then, in the year 1766, declared that his death rendered necessary the alteration of the terms in which the oath of abjuration should be taken, and instead of saying that they abjured the title of James III., they gave the words at present in use, abjuring the title of the descendants of the person pretending to be James III. But that was no doubt as rational a proceeding as could well be. In the first place there was a pretender claiming the throne, and there was a great party ready, and even appearing in arms, in the first year of the reign of King George I. Parliament then in the first instance called upon every man as a matter of security to abjure the title of James III., and then, when he died, they again called upon every person to abjure the title of his descendants. But now, since the year 1807, there have been descendants of the person calling himself James III. Cardinal York, I think, died in that year, and from that time there has not been the least necessity for that abjuration. Therefore, by the solemn oath which we take, abjuring the title of the descendants of a person who has not left any descendants, the title of a family which does not now exist, we are guilty of something very like a mockery; and being now brought under the notice of this House, I think the practice will not be any longer continued. Everybody, of course, knows that if there is any pretence to a title, it must be in the descendants of Charles I. and not of James II.; but, in fact, the title of the Queen is so perfectly well established, that I think it is only necessary to declare our adherence to the settlement of the Crown by the Act which settles it in the present family, and that it is not necessary to abjure the title of any foreign prince. The oath of abjuration ends with these words:—

> "And I do make this recognition, acknowledgement, abjuration, renunciation, and promise, heartily, willingly, and truly, upon the true faith of a Christian. So help me God."

Now, Sir, with respect to these words, I argued last year that they were intended as a sanction, and that they ought not to be continued to the exclusion of persons of the Jewish religion who had been elected by the suffrages of any body of constituents. I do not wish at this time to go again at length into that argument. I own it appears to me, after all the debates we had last Session upon the subject, that all the objections resolved themselves into this—that the Jewish subjects of Her Majesty were of a different opinion in matters of religion and conscience from the Roman Catholics and Protestants who might be Members of this House, and therefore that they ought to be excluded. Upon this subject I must again maintain that you had no right to exclude any subject of this realm duly elected, except on the ground that some of their doctrines or opinions were such as to render them unfit to be Members of this House, and incompetent to perform its duties. For instance, with regard to the Roman Catholics it was at one time alleged—I will not stop now to inquire whether truly or falsely—that they were persons with a divided allegiance—that they owed allegiance to the Pope, which made their allegiance to the Sovereign of these realms a wholly imperfect allegiance; that they never would be satisfied with paying obedience to a Protestant Sovereign or a Protestant Government; but that they would be constantly attempting to overturn it, and to introduce the Roman Catholic religion and supremacy into this House. I say I will not enter into that allegation now, but I will give my opinion that if it were proved, it would form a good and sufficient reason for excluding Roman Catholics from this House. So again with regard to the exclusion of Protestant Dissenters, not from this House, but from office; it was alleged that they would use the powers of office for the destruction of the Established Church—that there would be no security for the Establishment—and that they would never cease their endeavours to subvert and destroy it. I say that allegation was of considerable weight when the question under discussion was, whether Dissenters should be admitted to office; but as regards the Jews no man can venture to say that there is anything in their opinions which is hostile to the constitution of this country, or that they would use any power which they possess for the purpose of injuring or destroying our constitution, or still less our monarchy. Well, Sir, if that is so, this comes to be a case of pure unmitigated persecution—the denial of privileges is persecution—a persecution similar in nature to that violent one which led to the faggot and the axe; and it bears this odious feature, that the persons whom you do exclude have no means of enforcing their rights. Exclude the Roman Catholics —attempt to-morrow to do it—and you have, immediately, five or six millions of people in a state of bitter and exasperated discontent. Exclude the Protestant Dissenters, and you have some three millions of people in the United Kingdom who are at once estranged from your constitution and your laws; but, exclude the Jews, and you know perfectly well that you are safe in that exclusion, and that you may enjoy all the triumph and all the pleasure of your persecution, without exposing yourselves to any danger from their discontent. I say, therefore, Sir, that this exclusion, after the admission of Roman Catholics and of Protestant Dissenters, against whom there were plausible, though by no means sufficient, reasons, is peculiarly odious and unjust. Sir, I will now state what it is that I propose to do with the view of amending these laws. I have already stated, with regard to the Roman Catholics, that this matter having been so recently settled, and there being no sufficient reason for the disturbance of that settlement, I propose no alteration whatever. With regard to the other subjects of Her Majesty, I propose that there should be a general oath taken, and I have taken nearly all the words of it from the very able report of the Commission which was appointed by Lord Lyndhurst, and the report of which appeared in 1845. That report does not touch upon the question as to previous declaration respecting oaths taken by Members of Parliament. But the oath there proposed is as nearly as possible that which I now propose for the consideration of the House. It is as follows:—

> "I, A. B., swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Victoria, and that I will maintain the succession of the Crown as established by an Act intituled 'An Act for the further Limitation of the Crown, and better securing the rights and liberties of the subjects;' and that I do not believe that the Pope of Rome, or any other foreign prince, prelate, person, State, or potentate, hath, or ought to have, any temporal or civil jurisdiction, authority, or power within this realm; and that I will defend, to the utmost of my power, the settlement of property within this realm as established by the laws; and I do make this recognition, declaration, and promise, heartily, willingly, and truly, upon the true faith of a Christian. So help me God."

I propose that to be generally the oath to be taken by Members of Parliament; and I propose, in conformity with the same Acts, that when that shall be administered to a person professing the Jewish religion, the words, "upon the true faith of a Christian" shall be omitted. Now, Sir, it might be a question whether the words "on the true faith of a Christian," should be contained in any of the oaths or not. I own, with regard to any security to be obtained from them, I cannot think that a barrier which did not prove of any effect against the admission of a Bolingbroke, a Gibbon, and a Wilkes, can be looked upon as any very efficient barrier. But I am aware that advantage will be taken of their omission, in order to say that an attempt was made to admit infidels and unbelievers into this House, and that such would be the effect of this measure. I therefore continue these words in the oath. I leave the Roman Catholics exactly on the footing they are at present. I propose that other subjects of Her Majesty should take the oath which I have read; and I propose further, that when any person professing the Jewish religion shall approach the table and ask to take this oath, the words "on the true faith of a Christian" shall be omitted by him. By these means, Sir, I think that the measure of religious liberty will be made complete. All persons being subjects of Her Majesty, and inhabitants of these realms, will have the power of being elected Members of this House, and of taking their seats as the representatives of the people, by whom they are returned. The people will thereby acquire that which they ought to have—the full right of choosing any person whom it may be their will to choose, otherwise properly qualified for a seat in this House. There will be no longer the stain upon us of religious exclusion and intolerance. The saying of King William III., who had learnt the maxims of religious liberty in his native country, that "conscience is God's province," will be carried into effect by the oaths to be taken by means of this House. We shall no longer bear the reproach of excluding any persons on account of their religious faith from the privilege of being Members of Parliament. We shall complete that great edifice which of late years it has been the boast of statesmen to endeavour to erect. We may be told, indeed, that there is danger in throwing open our doors so wide. My belief, on the contrary, is that whether you examine the precepts of Christianity or the maxims of the constitution, it is your duty, as it is your policy, to throw open those doors as widely as possible, to place no religious bar of exclusion against any class of persons professing any particular religious persuasions. And in the belief that what I propose to you will clear away ambiguities, remove those parts of the oaths which are unnecessary, and make your whole system defensible and justifiable in the eyes of this country and of the world, I now ask this House to resolve itself into a Committee to consider the oaths to be taken by the Members of the two Houses of Parliament.

Mr. GOULBURN said, he was not in the least degree insensible to the importance of the question which the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) had brought under the consideration of the House. The alteration of those statutes by which they had been accustomed hitherto to secure the due execution of their duty by those who were placed in a legislative capacity, could never be other than a matter of serious consideration. With regard to the oath of abjuration, it was certainly open to consideration, and it was not his intention to resist the noble Lord's going into Committee for the purpose of presenting to the House the measure by which he actually proposed to alter or abrogate it; but in giving his consent to this first stage of the measure, he must enter his protest against being supposed to adopt the principles upon which the noble Lord recommended it. He did not intend to discuss the oath of supremacy at that moment; but he presumed that when that oath was under consideration in 1829, good reasons were urged why it should be retained in its then form; and though he did not mean to say that the decision then come to precluded the House from altering it now, yet he must declare that the principle on which the noble Lord proposed to alter it was not one which he was prepared to sanction. The noble Lord said, that if any man had a doubt as to the meaning of that oath, that doubt on the part of an individual would be sufficient to induce him to give it up. He (Mr. Goulburn) could not think that doubts of that limited description could be any justification for the alteration of that oath. The more important part of the noble Lord's speech was that which related to the effect that the proposed alteration would have upon the admission of Jews to Parliament. He wished the noble Lord distinctly to understand that, though not now disposed to oppose the introduction of the measure, he had in no degree departed from the opinions which he expressed last Session as to the inexpediency of the admission which the noble Lord proposed. He felt then, as now, that the admission of Jews would be derogatory to the character of Parliament, would diminish the salutary authority which it ought to possess over the people of this country—would be productive of serious consequences on the religion of the people at home—and would operate materially against the extension of religion abroad. And whilst he retained that opinion, he could not admit that the individual respectability of the persons whom it was proposed to introduce, formed any just grounds for breaking through an important principle. The noble Lord told us, indeed, to-night in his speech, that the exclusion of any class of persons from Parliament, was in itself persecution; that the denial of these privileges was persecution; and that in the case of the Jews we indulged a pleasure of persecution, because we had no fears with respect to the power of the persons persecuted; but he was surprised when the noble Lord told us that the exclusion of any class, by means of an oath, was persecution, that the noble Lord did not read the very oath which he himself proposed to be taken by Members of this House. The noble Lord retained in that oath the words "the true faith of a Christian;" he did not limit the taking of that oath to the Christian subjects of Her Majesty, but he imposed on every other subject of Her Majesty not being a Jew, be he a Mahometan, or any profession not Christian, the very restriction which he himself said, in the case of the Jew, was absolute persecution; and in proportion as the number of those who might be candidates for Parliament might be diminished, the noble Lord introduced this measure of persecution, and himself indulged the pleasure of persecution. In short, religious liberty appeared to be granted solely to the Jews, while it was denied to all others. As he said before, he did not intend, until the measure was fully before the House, to go into an extended argument; he was only anxious in the outset to deny the persecuting spirit which the noble Lord imputed to those who resisted his Bill, and would take the noble Lord's own measure as a justification for his denial: when the noble Lord talked of religious liberty being complete, how would he answer the statement he had just made to the House? Religious liberty was to be confined solely to the Jew; it was to be denied to every other man, how different soever his opinions might be from those of the Christian community. He confessed he was somewhat surprised that the noble Lord should have thought it necessary, upon his view of the subject, to retain the two oaths which he now proposed for different classes of Members of this House. But he should not pursue the subject. As far as he was individually concerned, he would rather see the measure of the noble Lord, that he might fully understand the bearing of these new oaths, than enter into a discussion on the present occasion; and as the only object he had in view was to enter his protest against some of the doctrines which the noble Lord had laid down, and to state, his determined adherence to the principles which he advocated when the Bill for the Removal of Jewish Disabilities was before the House last Session, he would not, by any lengthened observations, interfere with the House going into Committee, and having before them the terms of the oath, and the regulations under which it was to be administered, which, after all, was the essence of the measure. He hoped the House would carefully consider the effect of the measure which the noble Lord proposed; that if they agreed with him that the introduction of the Jews into this Legislature would be derogatory to that assembly and destructive of its influence, that they would carefully consider the question how far the alteration of the oath, and the terms of it, might be such as to diminish the sense of the obligation. With this view he reserved what he had to say until the measure was brought before the House, and until they had an opportunity of considering it.

Mr. PLUMPTRE was inclined to think that those hon. Members who thought last year that the Bill introduced by the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) for the admission of Jews ought not to be passed, would also now be of opinion that the noble Lord should not proceed with this measure. He was prepared, in this first stage of the Bill, to offer every opposition to the noble Lord, and even to divide the House on this first question, if it were the pleasure of any hon. Members to go into the lobby with him. He would not conceal from himself this truth that there would have been no movement whatever in the matter had not the noble Lord been defeated in another place last year in the Bill which he introduced and carried in this House for the admission of the Jews; and, therefore, he said that if this measure were, as he believed it to be, for the admission of Jews into this House, he was disposed to offer his opposition to it in the very first stage. He must confess that, to his ears, the proposal of the noble Lord with regard to the admission of Jews into this House was exceedingly offensive. He meant nothing personal to the noble Lord; but he did think that the way in which he proposed to admit Jews into the House, and the terms he had mentioned to the House, were exceedingly offensive to Christians. What did the noble Lord propose to do? He proposed that the Jew should be excused from making use of those words which other Members were to make use of, "upon the true faith of a Christian," and yet the Jew was to be admitted into this House because he could repeat these words, "So help me God." It seemed to be by a trick, by a subterfuge, that the Jew was to be admitted into this House—that the Jew was to be accommodated at the expense of Him whom Christians venerated. When a Jew used the words, "So help me God," he had no respect to Him whom Christians adored and revered as their God and Saviour. He must say that the proposal was an exceedingly offensive one, from which he shrunk, and one which he trusted would never receive the sanction of Parliament. This was confessedly a religious Parliament. The noble Lord said there would be some risk and danger if you refused your Roman Catholic subjects admission to that House, because there might be seven or eight millions of them. The noble Lord said there might be also some danger if you refused to Dissenting subjects admission; but he said, "you might safely admit Jews, because they were so few." He (Mr. Plumptre), could not help looking at the word "safely," not merely with reference to the safety of the State, but he said that if they took any step by which they might forfeit the favour of Him who was "the Prince of the kings of the earth," "by whom kings reign, and princes decree justice;" if they took a step to provoke His displeasure, they were taking a step which they could take with anything but safety to the best interests of the country. If any other Member was disposed to view the matter as he viewed it, and divide the House on the first stage of the Bill, he should be opposed to conceding to the noble Lord even the first step of so dangerous a measure.

Mr. LAW said, he retained the opinions he had formerly expressed on this subject, which, so far from being changed, had gained greater strength by the interval since it was last discussed. Although this measure made a pretence of treating on oaths in general, it was obviously neither more nor less than the old question. The noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) had just stated that the exclusion of Jews from Parliament was a hateful and odious policy; but what a discovery was that for the noble Lord to make for the first time in the year 1848, when his Colleague was Baron Rothschild! The noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) had said, that the admission of Jews would complete the edifice of civil and religious liberty; but the very oath by which he proposed to accomplish this wonderful temple of freedom was itself a sentence of exclusion against others of Her Majesty's unchristian subjects, who unfortunately did not happen to have secured the suffrages of the citizens of London. He rose more particularly on the present occasion, because he felt bound to enter his protest against this measure at every stage; and he would take another opportunity in the course of the discussion of expressing his opinion upon it. But as the circumstances under which the measure was brought forward were most important, he would ask the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) who had only just told them the nature of the measure, not to urge the House to resolve itself itself into a Committee to take the measure into consideration within half an hour of its being introduced into the House. He thought it was due to the minority that the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) should give them an opportunity of having one night to consider whether they would make such an alteration in the oaths as would lead to the admission of Jews into that House. He asked the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) for that indulgence, though he must frankly tell him that he could not give him any assistance in carrying this measure, neither would he give to it any vexatious opposition; but he would give it every opposition in his power that was not vexatious. He asked the noble Lord to give them one night to consider this resolution, which he believed was not yet six hours old—which the noble Lord had not himself determined on when he rose from his bed that morning. It appeared that the speech of the noble Lord was 'a speech intended to be spoken' in reference to a far more comprehensive scheme than that now hastily presented to the House. It was indeed a most lame and impotent conclusion to the grandiloquent expressions of the noble Lord. Had the noble Lord, in curtailing his measure of its full dimensions, unhappily forgotten to curtail his peroration? The noble Lord had declared that this was a measure intended to relieve all classes of Her Majesty's subjects from religious disabilities; but it resolved itself into one for the relief only of the Jews; for the noble Lord said, that the parties affected by the present oath were so few that they could not resent the injuries inflicted upon them. Yet, notwithstanding those words, it was declared to be a measure for relieving all religious disabilities. He would not detain the House; but the noble Lord had, as he (Mr. Law) thought, indiscreetly (for he could not suppose that he would wilfully) told those who supported the present oaths, that they were the promoters of "a hateful and odious persecution." He did not think the noble Lord ought to have applied those terms to those by whom he (Mr. Law) was surrounded; and he therefore implored the noble Lord to give them time to consider the measure, and state the solemn reasons which induced them to dissent from it. When the noble Lord said *ad captandum* that he proposed to do away with one portion of the oath, because it had ceased to be of any use for forty or forty-two years, and that, therefore, they ought to go into Committee, he thought that the noble Lord was hardly dealing fairly with the House, its obvious intent only being to admit the Jews. He was sure the noble Lord, whose ability could not be doubted, had not fully considered and matured his measure before introducing it to the House. He (Mr. Law) did not wish to divide the House upon that occasion; but if his right hon. Friend (Mr. Goulburn), who had so solemnly entered his protest against the Bill, and his friends around him, thought it necessary to do so, he was not prepared to say he would not join them. He again asked the noble Lord—who had kept his secret so long and so closely that nobody could possibly guess how comprehensive or how limited it would be—at least to give him, and those who thought with him, one night to consider its import.

Mr. J. O'CONNELL did not, of course, intend to vote against the measure of the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell), but he could not help expressing his regret that the noble Lord had not considered the subject of oaths on a larger scale, and introduced a measure by which all those taken by Members of that House could have been reduced to one form. The noble Lord had noticed two or three parts of the oaths taken by Protestants, in which it was stated that the Pope had no spiritual authority in this kingdom; and he (Mr. J. O'Connell) would not attempt to add one word to his lucid explanation of the meaning of that oath. There were words in the Roman Catholic oath which had been made the subject of annoyance and insult to the members of that persuasion. He did not value those insults himself, and if those charges were again made in that House of the Roman Catholics tampering with their oaths, they, as honest, conscientious men, would know how to repel them as they had done before. But what he wanted was that the oath should be so altered as to do away with the war of words. In a few days that important subject was to be brought under consideration relative to which the difference existed as to their oath; and the Roman Catholic Members could not submit to the charge of violating their oaths with regard to the Established Church. In his opinion the noble Lord ought to make one general oath for all Members, though he should not object to the introduction of the present measure. He trusted that the noble Lord and the right hon. Gentleman who had assisted in drawing up the Roman Catholic oath, would be in their places when these bickerings were likely to occur, and would state what interpretation they put on the words of the Roman Catholic oath; and if their interpretation savoured of the charge of violating the oath, which had been attempted to be made against the Roman Catholics, he would acquiesce in their decision, and would resign his seat as a Member of that House.

Mr. BANKES could assure the House and the hon. Member who had just sat down, that he would not take part in the miserable bickerings to which he had alluded. He (Mr. Bankes) had expected that the right hon. Member for the University of Oxford (Mr. Gladstone) would have risen and given the House his opinion on this measure. He had the more expected it, because his colleague, the hon. Baronet (Sir R. H. Inglis), who was generally to be found in his place on all occasions when any measure affecting the Church was likely to be brought forward, was that evening absent on the bed of sickness. If they, speaking with the authority which belonged to them, had agreed in any respect in the proposition now submitted by the noble Lord, he should have been ready, on this the first occasion of the introduction of the measure, to have bowed to their authority; and although it might have been contrary to his own opinions, on any point involving a question of principle, to admit even the first introduction of a measure to the House, if he had had the high authority of the Members of the two Universities that he should make that acquiescence, he would not have contravened their wishes. He was, however, bound to say, after what had fallen from the hon. Member for East Kent (Mr. Plumptre), to whom he always listened with the greatest attention on all matters affecting the Church, that if he divided the House upon the question, and he was only the second, he would divide with him. It was true that the noble Lord had not put his measure on this subject so prominently forward as he did last year; he had managed to involve it with political considerations of very inferior importance, as he (Mr. Bankes) thought very unnecessarily, as the noble Lord must know that the House would be at all times ready to strike out from the proceedings of Parliament anything not necessary to be retained, or which might appear in its nature unsuitable to solemn occasions. In putting the measure before the House, he would not say the noble Lord had done it unworthily, but he would say that it was hardly worthy of the noble Lord's character—it was hardly worthy of the noble Lord's standing in that House—to overlay the question with other matter only for the sake of argument. He did not object to the noble Lord's historical disquisition with regard to the accession to the Throne. It was true that there was now no Pretender who could claim a right of accession to the Throne, prior to Her present Majesty, as descending from James III.; and of those who might claim as descending from James I., there was only to be found as a claimant from an elder stock, a monarch who, from the course he had pursued in his own kingdom, would no doubt be happy to find a vacant throne anywhere. There was, however, no vacant throne for him in this kingdom, nor was there any reason to fear that there would be a vacancy either for the descendants of James III. or of James I. He said the noble Lord had not acted fairly by the House in calling on it to go into Committee on matters which required no such talents as those of the noble Lord to cover them with ridicule, and mix them up with matters which were felt by a large number of Members upon that side of the House, and a considerable number on the other side, to be of an important nature as regarded the religion of the country. Not only must he (Mr. Bankes) concur with his hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Cambridge, when he said that the nature of the proposition to be brought forward had not been understood; but he felt that the House was not so full as it would have been if it had been known what the noble Lord really intended to bring forward; and therefore it was not fair for the noble Lord to ask them without further time for communication with Members now absent from the House, to go into Committee to consider the oath, as now proposed. As far as he (Mr. Bankes) was able to judge of it, the oath, as it was proposed, gave ample security on many points; but he felt that it did not give security on the point which many of his friends considered to be of the first importance—the Established Church. He did find that the security of the Throne was provided for; which perhaps required no oath. He felt assured that the Occupant of the Throne was so enshrined in the hearts of the people as not to require the protection of an oath for the security of the Throne. He also found that the settlement of property was duly provided for; but he believed the noble Lord had omitted these important words in reference to the Church:—

> "I do hereby disclaim, disavow, and solemnly abjure any intention to subvert the present Church Establishment, as settled by law within this realm; and I do solemnly swear that I will never exercise any privilege, to which I am or may become entitled, to disturb or weaken the Protestant religion or Protestant Government."

And he would ask, why were those words omitted from the oath? [Lord J. RUSSELL: They are not in the present.] The noble Lord said, they were not in at present. Did he mean that they were to be introduced? [Lord J. RUSSELL: The words are not in the present oath.] The noble Lord said, the words were not in the present oath; but it must be recollected, when that oath was framed none but members of the Established Church were allowed to be Members of that House. It was unnecessary when all the parties who had to take it were members of the Established Church; but though it was unnecessary in the original oaths, when they framed the oath for the admission of the Roman Catholics into Parliament, it was thought necessary that they should be called upon to swear that they would not disturb the Church as by law established. Now, when they were going to admit—if admit they did—those into the House who not only did not profess the doctrines of the Established Church, but professed doctrines altogether adverse to the Christian faith—professed to disbelieve them — professed — it was always under painful and peculiar circumstances that hon. Members had to address the House when they were speaking on points of faith in an assembly so constituted as this is now constituted, most unwilling to give offence, they could hardly speak freely what they felt. He considered it was the duty of any hon. Member, in proposing to carry a measure for altering the oath to be taken in that House, or affording an opportunity for the introduction of parties of another creed, to take care that those who entered the House, if they could not revere, should at least be restrained from destroying, from disturbing, and even from dishonouring the Church. They were now called upon to admit into the House parties who were not only hostile to the Church, but were not even bound to treat it with respect or common decency. He thought it was their duty in case this measure should pass, which would however receive his constant opposition, to introduce an assurance binding, conscientiously, honourably, and honestly, if not religiously, in favour of the Established Church. Under these circumstances, if the hon. Member for East Kent (Mr. Plumptre) was determined to divide the House, he (Mr. Bankes) would readily divide with him, though he was aware that the numbers present were not numerous, and he felt they would be dividing under some disadvantages.

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, after the pointed allusion of my hon. Friend the Member for Dorsetshire (Mr. Bankes), I shall not shrink from stating my opinion upon this subject; and as far as regards the main purpose of the noble Lord, I feel bound to say, with my hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Cambridge, that my opinions, like his, have undergone no change, unless it is that they have been confirmed by reflection during the interval since the last discussion of this subject. I am, therefore, deliberately convinced that the civil and political claims of the Jew to the discharge of civil and political duties ought not, in justice, to be barred, and cannot beneficially be barred, because of the difference between his religion and ours. With reference to what has fallen from the hon. Member for East Kent, I say, with all due respect, and with the most sincere and cordial respect for him, that, with my views of the propriety of admitting Jews to the Legislature, I think that, in doing so, we do not abandon our duty to the Almighty; but we are acting in strict fulfilment of our duty by giving effect to the principles of natural justice. I think, however, that though the main purpose of the noble Lord, may have that view, yet I put it to the House whether there are not sufficient grounds for going into Committee independent of that main purpose? There are various secondary questions which the noble Lord has introduced to us in respect to the alteration of the oaths taken by ourselves, which, though of far inferior importance compared with the constitutional question raised by the admission of Jews into Parliament, yet are not altogether undeserving of attention and consideration on the part of this House. The alteration which the noble Lord proposes is an improvement, and that improvement is of weight sufficient to justify even those who are most opposed to the admission of the Jews to give their assent to the proposal of the noble Lord to go into Committee. We must all feel that oaths, when they are taken in public by large masses of men, and under associations not very favourable to solemn and religious feelings, have a tendency to degenerate into formalism; and especially is that tendency aggravated by oaths being prolonged beyond the necessity of the case, and by introducing irrelevant matter; while by expunging irrelevant matter, and excluding words which have no rational meaning, we pursue an object about which there can be no difference, and the importance of which is by no means insignificant. It is said, on the highest authority, that our words should be few on all those solemn acts which have peculiar reference to the Deity. I cannot say that our present oaths have no words contained in them apart from the purpose in view. I cannot say that they do not admit of abbreviation, or that they bring before the mind propositions in that lucid, distinct, and intelligible form, with regard to which all oaths having a peculiarly solemn end in view ought to be framed. I, therefore, venture to express a hope, as the purpose of the noble Lord, apart from the admission of the Jews into the Legislature, is a sufficient plea for going into Committee: I put it to hon. Gentlemen that they will be in no respect committed by their assent being given to this proposition of the noble Lord, and allowing the House to go into Committee for the general purpose. With respect to the plan of the noble Lord, I will not now enter into any detailed argument; but I cannot avoid expressing my satisfaction that it differs, in what I think an important position, from a scheme that was announced in the public journals some few weeks ago. I frankly own that I am glad that the noble Lord has retained the words "on the true faith of a Christion," in respect to all Christian Members of this House, considering the solemn duties which we are called upon to perform. I think it is well that we should approach the performance of those duties with something like a feeling of that solemnity; and though I do not deny the integrity of an oath which we might take in common with the Jews, yet I think the noble Lord has acted wisely in declining to reduce that high standard which we have fixed for ourselves. But, Sir, I would venture to make one suggestion to the noble Lord with respect to the oath which he means to propose, and the suggestion I shall make is in the sense of the alteration that he is about to advise. The noble Lord proposes, as I understand, to exclude the words forming the latter clauses of the oath of supremacy, by which Protestants swear that no foreign prince, prelate, person, state, or potentate, hath, or ought to have, any spiritual or ecclesiastical power or authority within these realms. But he proposes to substitute a declaration to be taken by Roman Catholics and by Protestants and Jews, that no foreign prince, prelate, person, state, or potentate, hath, or ought to have, any temporal or civil jurisdiction, either directly or indirectly, within these realms. Now, I submit to the noble Lord, that he might improve his proposal by leaving those words out altogether. For what use is it that gentlemen who are not Roman Catholics should be called upon to abjure the temporal power of the Pope within these realms? You may find Roman Catholics — there may be some gentlemen professing that religion—at least it is a conceivable case, that there might be Roman Catholics, who think that the Pope indirectly might be entitled to some temporal jurisdiction within these realms; but with Protestants, or any not Roman Catholics, such cannot possibly be the case. Well, then, if that be so, the principle upon which the noble Lord has proceeded, of excluding all irrelevant matter from the oath, ought to carry him as far as the point I now submit to his consideration; and he ought not to call upon any hon. Gentleman, whether Roman Catholic, Protestant, or Jew, to abjure their belief in a temporal power that it is morally impossible they could entertain. The noble Lord tells us that it has been introduced in the nature of a test, and not with a view of giving greater solemnity to the discharge of our duties, or of laying down a higher standard of duty. But the object originally in view was the exclusion of certain parties. Now, it can exclude no Protestant and no Jew; but it does put in their mouths, at a moment when no irrelevant word should be used, words that are neither necessary nor useful for any purpose whatsoever. I thought it necessary, Sir, to make this suggestion at this stage of the proceeding. The noble Lord shall have my support in every stage of this measure. I fear I cannot undertake to speak on the part of my hon. and respected Colleague; but I hope hon. Gentlemen will not debar the noble Lord from going into Committee, and proposing, in the first instance, alterations in certain points of our oaths, in which they are certainly capable of improvement.

MR. NEWDEGATE, having felt no doubt as to the nature of the oath taken by him at the table, and not having felt any of that embarrassment which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Oxford seemed to think might have confused the understanding of some Protestant Members of the House while taking that oath, but having taken it willingly, wittingly, and with a full intention of abiding by it, entertained the greatest objection to the proposal of the noble Lord. What were the characteristics of that proposition? The noble Lord had clubbed together every objection entertained by every small section against this oath, and had framed his proposed oath in such a manner as to gain a transitory applause from these objectors. The noble Lord proposed to alter the oath by removing the declaration made by Protestants, that they do not acknowledge any spiritual authority of the Pope in this country, for the purpose of conciliating the Roman Catholics. He had not been so fortunate as to go the full length proposed by the hon. Member for Limerick—since he had not totally swept away the provisions of the oath which guarded the Church of England from the attacks contemplated by the hon. Member—he had not gone far enough to meet the views of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Oxford, because he had retained in that oath a declaration against the temporal authority of the Pope. Now he (Mr. Newdegate) must say that they had seen much in the present Session to make it necessary to take a test of opinion on that subject; and if any thing could make him understand the support given to the measure—if any thing could elucidate his understanding of that support—it was the proposition made by the right hon. Member for the University of Oxford, that they should cease to deny the right of the Pope to exercise both spiritual and temporal authority in this realm. This indeed threw a curious light upon the support given to this measure by the right hon. Gentleman. Now he (Mr. Newdegate) also wished to make a proposal to the noble Lord. He thought the terms of the Motion had been altered since the noble Lord spoke, and he asked the noble Lord to consent to the adjournment of the House, in order that they might have the advantage of knowing how the oath and the resolution were intended to stand. He thought the noble Lord ought to consent to this suggestion, in order that they might know what they were debating about. He did not wish, on the present occasion, to enter more fully into the subject; but he must say that he felt strongly with the hon. Member for East Kent, that retaining the words "on the true faith of a Christian," in the oath to be taken by Protestants, and allowing those words to be omitted by others, did seem to bear the appearance of a mockery; and he would say that if they did strike them out for any, they ought to strike them out for all, for they had no right to impose them if they did not impose them upon all. There was no ground for not trusting the honour of Protestants as much as the honour of Jews. If the House of Commons was to cease to be a Christian assembly, let the avowal be made at once. The oaths taken by Protestant and Christian Members, would be binding without those words. They did not need the repetition of that test to secure the observance of the condition of those oaths; but they did prize them highly as characterising that House the Christian representative assembly of a Christian country, and would defend them to the last. They did not think the name cited, when they pledged themselves on their true faith as Christians, a matter of indifference. Was not the whole faith of the Christian centered in a name? What did their hopes rest upon but a name? They did trust, therefore, that that name would not be removed from the profession of the State, at least they would do their best to defend it. The hon. Member concluded by moving that the House do now adjourn.

Mr. H. DRUMMOND said, that the noble Lord had grounded his introduction of the measure upon the desire to do natural justice to the Jew; but the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Oxford had gone further, and it seemed that in his view, as well as in his own (Mr. Drummond's), they were required to do natural justice to the Jew by returning to natural religion. There appeared to him to be considerable discrepancy between the speech of the noble Lord, and the conclusion to which he had come; and that gave him some doubts as to the course which ought to be followed upon that occasion. He believed, with hon. Gentlemen opposite, that there was much in the oaths taken by Members that would be better left out; but, as it appeared to him, the present question was nothing more than the old Jew Bill again. Whatever might be the overture, the prelude by which the piece was introduced was just a simple *rechauffée* of the old fish. But if the noble Lord were really desirous of going into Committee of the House, he (Mr. Drummond) thought it would be a matter of very great convenience not to divide upon the question.

Mr. NEWDEGATE (who was called upon by Mr. Bankes and several hon. Gentlemen near him not to press the question of adjournment) asked the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) to read the amended oath, as he intended to propose it, and the resolution as it stood.

Lord J. RUSSELL: The Resolution which I shall propose on going into Committee is—

> "That it is expedient to alter the oaths required to be taken by the subjects of Her Majesty not professing the Roman Catholic Religion, as qualifications for sitting and voting in Parliament, and to make provision in respect of the said oaths for the relief of Her Majesty's subjects professing the Jewish Religion."

Upon that Resolution I shall be enabled to bring in a Bill; and the oath which I intend to propose is that which I read in an early part of the debate. There will be a provision for striking out the words "on the true faith of a Christian," when the party to whom the oath so tendered is a member of the Jewish persuasion.

Mr. WALPOLE suggested to the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) the propriety of asking the House merely to go into Committee *pro formâ*, for the purpose of laying his Resolution on the table of the House, and taking the discussion thereupon on some future day.

Lord J. RUSSELL: If I should adopt the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Walpole), I should not have an opportunity of laying the proposed oath before the House. In a Committee *pro formâ*, I should only have an opportunity of proposing, in general words, that it is expedient to alter the words of the oath, and make provision for persons professing the Jewish religion. My object, certainly, would not be gained by merely going into Committee *pro formâ;* I wish at once to lay the whole measure before the House.

Mr. WALPOLE said, the House had now before it, according to the statement of the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell), two distinct propositions—one, that a formal alteration should be made in the oath; the other, that a substantial alteration should be made in the oath, which alteration involved a fundamental principle. Now, he (Mr. Walpole), for one, felt that if the vote they were going to give was to be considered an admission of that principle, they ought not to be called upon to make such admission; and although he came down with the intention of acquiescing in any general proposition for the purpose of considering the nature of the oaths taken by Members, he felt, after the discussion which had taken place, not only the greatest unwillingness, but, he might almost say, the moral impossibility of consenting to such a course. The House would observe that the noble Lord proposed the alteration in the oath upon three grounds—that some parts are superfluous, that some parts are unnecessary, and that other parts are unduly restrictive. Now, he (Mr. Walpole) quite concurred with the noble Lord in thinking that some parts of the oath were superfluous, some were unnecessary, and in other respects it was inappropriate to the time in which we live, because they had survived the circumstances which originally gave rise to them. Let him add one word as to the substantial part of the proposition. He would not enter into the general question now. But he thought when the right hon. Member for the University of Oxford (Mr. Gladstone) put it on the ground of natural justice, he would have done well to consider whether there was not still, and whether there had not been always, a broad distinction between political rights and political duties. And before the discussion should again come on, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would pause and reflect, whether the rights which the people of this country possessed, both to the protection of the law and the support of the law, be they Jews or be they Christians, necessarily gave them those political privileges which also involved political duties—since those duties, according to the principles established in the constitution, could only be performed in a Christian State by those who were bound by a Christian obligation. He would only trouble the House with one other remark. He had hoped that the noble Lord would not have thought it necessary to renew this discussion—to reopen a question which had been fully discussed and deliberately settled only nine months ago; and that too in the very same Parliament as that which it was now submitted to again. He (Mr. Walpole) felt this the more strongly, because he had always understood that it was a wise policy on the part of the Government not to hazard upon slight grounds a collision or disagreement between the two Houses of Parliament. He had also understood and felt this more strongly than anything else—that it was a still wiser policy on the part of the Government not to offend or in any way do violence to the religious convictions of the great mass of the people. Both these considerations were, in his humble judgment, most unhappily disregarded on the present occasion; for no one could doubt, that if the noble Lord were to carry his resolution, he would, at all events, run the risk of that disagreement which was so much to be deprecated; and no one could doubt, moreover, if he had inquired into this subject during the recess, that it would give a painful shock to the feelings and opinions of a great many people—he did not mean the ignorant and unintelligent, but some of the best and ablest men, who regarded this question in no other light than as a national violation of our Christian principles. [The O'GORMAN MAHON: Hear, hear! *and a laugh.*] Notwithstanding the laugh of the hon. Member for Ennis, he would say that he (Mr. Walpole) had in his mind's eye, when using that phrase some of our best and ablest men, whose names he could quote if desired to do so; and if the hon. Gentleman had referred to their works on both sides of the question, as he had done, he would have seen that some of these good and able men did really regard it—and now he would use a still stronger phrase—as a national renunciation of our Christian character. He (Mr. Walpole) owned that he had been carried away further than he intended; but he trusted that the House would be of opinion that there was nothing in the observations which he had ventured to offer that called for a laugh. This he must add, that if the religious convictions of many persons in this country were not to be regarded, and the laugh he had heard when alluding to the subject were again repeated, then instead of this being, as it was called, an unmitigated case of persecution against the Jews, his opinion was that the persons who had most need to be apprehensive of persecution were those who belonged to the Church of England.

LORD J. RUSSELL: I had hoped that, as the House after repeated discussion, agreed last year to that which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Walpole) states to be the only point upon which a difference could arise this year—namely, the removal of the Jewish disabilities—I should have been allowed to introduce the Bill, and that the discussion would have been reserved for some future stage of the Bill. All I can do at present is, to propose that the House should go into Committee. If the House is pleased to go into Committee, I should then propose this resolution, and put it into the hands of the Chairman. If the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Walpole) or any other Member of this House might think it necessary to raise a discussion upon that resolution, and to make that the question upon which they are disposed to resist the proposition that I shall make, I should then certainly not propose to go further into that discussion on the present occasion. Sir, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Walpole) has, however, not confined himself to the simple question of whether or not the

House should resolve itself into Committee for the purpose of having the resolution submitted to them; he has expressed his surprise that I should stir this question after it had been mooted, and, as he says, settled nine months ago. Sir, that is not the way in which I have understood the constitution of this country. I had thought that if, for example, the question for taking away some of the Roman Catholic disabilities had been passed by this House, and rejected by the other House of Parliament, yet that no Member of the House of Commons would consider himself bound by that decision—he would not consider the vote of the House of Lords irrevocable and irreversible—one which it was impossible for the House to rescind. We know that the House of Lords at length passed the Bill for the relief of the Roman Catholics, although previously rejected. I myself took part in a measure of the greatest importance—namely, the Reform Bill; it was carried by large majorities in this House, but when it arrived in the House of Lords it was rejected. Why, if there is any truth in the hon. Gentleman's (Mr. Walpole's) doctrine, we ought then to have sat down contented—that the question of reform was settled—that it was settled that there should be no reform of Parliament, and we should not have ventured during the Administration of Earl Grey again to disturb the question. Sir, I say again, that with respect to that question, and with respect to general questions, though they have been once rejected by the House of Lords, yet, with all due deference to the House of Lords, we may again ask them to reconsider a question; and they, in the full exercise of their undoubted right, may reconsider that question, and they may give their affirmative or negative to such question. But that the decision of the House of Lords once made should be binding for ever on this House, and that we never should bring forward such a question again, although it may seem to the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Walpole) a correct mode of proceeding, is one to which I can never submit, and one which I conceive would reverse the whole practice of the House. Having said thus much in justification of the course I have pursued, I can only say that I am sorry if any term I may have used should have been offensive to any hon. Gentleman. I used them as agreeing with my own notions of the policy that ought to be pursued, and not with the intention of applying to hon. Gentlemen the character of "persecutors," and certainly not with the intention of giving offence to any hon. Gentleman. I have only now to add, that I shall resist the Motion for adjournment, and to express my wish that the Motion for going into Committee may be adopted.

Mr. NEWDEGATE intimated that he would withdraw his Motion for adjournment.

Whereupon, Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn:"—Motion, by leave, withdrawn:—Main Question put:—The House divided; Ayes 214; Noes 111: Majority 103.

List of the Ayes.

Abdy, T. N.
Adair, R. A. S.
Aglionby, H. A.
Anson, hon. Col.
Anson, Visct.
Anstey, T. C.
Armstrong, Sir A.
Arundel and Surrey, Earl of
Bagshaw, J.
Baines, M. T.
Baring, rt. hn. Sir F. T.
Barron, Sir H. W.
Bass, M. T.
Bellew, R. M.
Berkeley, hon. Capt.
Berkeley, C. L. G.
Bernal, R.
Birch, Sir T. B.
Blewitt, R. J.
Bouverie, hon. E. P.
Boyle, hon. Col.
Bright, J.
Brocklehurst, J.
Brotherton, J.
Brown, H.
Bunbury, E. H.
Butler, P. S.
Buxton, Sir E. N.
Callaghan, D.
Campbell, hon. W. F.
Cardwell, E.
Carter, J. B.
Cavendish, hon. C. C.
Cavendish, hon. G. H.
Clerk, rt. hon. Sir G.
Clifford, H. M.
Cockburn, A. J. E.
Colebrooke, Sir T. E.
Cowan, C.
Cowper, hon. W. F.
Craig, W. G.
Crawford, W. S.
Crowder, R. B.
Cubitt, W.
Dashwood, G. H.
Davie, Sir H. R. F.
Dawson, hon. T. V.
D'Eyncourt, rt. hon. C. T.
Duff, G. S.
Duncan, Visct.
Dundas, Adm.
Dunne, F. P.
Ebrington, Visct.
Ellice, E.
Ellis, J.
Elliot, hon. J. E.
Enfield, Visct.
Evans, J.
Evans, W.
Ewart, W.
Fagan, W.
Ferguson, Col.
Ferguson, Sir R. A.
FitzPatrick, rt. hon. J.
Fitzwilliam, hon. G. W.
Foley, J. H. H.
Forster, M.
Fortescue, C.
Fox, R. M.
Fox, W. J.
Freestun, Col.
Gibson, rt. hon. T. M.
Gladstone, rt. hon. W. E.
Glyn, G. C.
Grace, O. D. J.
Graham, rt. hon. Sir J.
Grattan, H.
Greene, J.
Grenfell, C. P.
Grenfell, C. W.
Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.
Grey, R. W.
Grosvenor, Earl
Haggitt, F. R.
Hallyburton, Lord J. F.
Hardcastle, J. A.
Hastie, A.
Hastie, A.
Hawes, B.
Hayter, rt. hon. W. G.
Headlam, T. E.
Heathcoat, J.
Henry, A.
Heyworth, L.
Hobhouse, rt. hon. Sir J.
Hobhouse, T. B.
Hodges, T. L.
Hollond, R.
Howard, Lord E.
Howard, hon. C
Hume, J.
Humphery, Ald.
Jackson, W.

Jermyn, Earl
Keppel, hon. G. T.
Ker, R.
Kershaw, J.
Kildare, Marq. of
King, hon. P. J. L.
Labouchere, rt. hon. H.
Langston, J. H.
Lemon, Sir C.
Lewis, rt. hon. Sir T. F.
Lewis, G. C.
Macnamara, Maj.
M'Gregor, J.
Mahon, The O'Gorman
Maitland, T.
Mangles, R. D.
Martin, J.
Martin, C. W.
Martin, S.
Matheson, A.
Matheson, Col.
Maule, rt. hon. F.
Melgund, Visct.
Milner, W. M. E.
Moffatt, G.
Monsell, W.
Morgan, H. K. G.
Morris, D.
Mowatt, F.
Mulgrave, Earl of
Muntz, G. F.
Norreys, Lord
Norreys, Sir D. J.
Nugent, Lord
Nugent, Sir P.
O'Brien, J.
O'Brien, T.
O'Connell, J.
Ogle, S. C. H.
Osborne, R.
Owen, Sir J.
Paget, Lord C.
Paget, Lord G.
Palmerston, Visct.
Parker, J.
Pearson, C.
Peel, rt. hon. Sir R.
Peel, F.
Pigott, F.
Pilkington, J.
Pinney, W.
Power, N.
Powlett, Lord W.
Pusey, P.
Rawdon, Col.
Reynolds, J.
Ricardo, J. L.
Ricardo, O.
Rice, E. R.
Rich, H.
Robartes, T. J. A.
Romilly, Sir J.
Russell, Lord J.
Russell, hon. E. S.
Russell, F. C. H.
Rutherfurd, A.
Salwey, Col.
Sandars, J.
Scholefield, W.
Scully, F.
Seymour, Lord
Sheil, rt. hon. R. L.
Shelburne, Earl of
Slaney, R. A.
Smith, J. A.
Smith, M. T.
Smith, J. B.
Somerville, rt. hon. Sir W.
Spearman, H. J.
Stansfield, W. R. C.
Stanton, W. H.
Strickland, Sir G.
Stuart, Lord D.
Sullivan, M.
Sutton, J. H. M.
Talfourd, Serj.
Tancred, H. W.
Tenison, E. K.
Thicknesse, R. A.
Thompson, Col.
Thompson, G.
Thornely, T.
Towneley, J.
Townshend, Capt.
Vane, Lord H.
Vivian, J. H.
Waddington, D.
Ward, H. G.
Watkins, Col. L.
Wawn, J. T.
Westhead, J. P.
Willcox, B. M.
Williams, J.
Wilson, J.
Wilson, M.
Wood, rt. hon. Sir C.
Wood, W. P.
Wortley, rt. hon. J. S.
Wyld, J.
Wyvill, M.
Young, Sir J.

TELLERS.

Tufnell, H.
Hill, Lord M.

List of the Noes.

Acland, Sir T. D.
Adderley, C. B.
Arbuthnott, hon. H.
Arkwright, G.
Bankes, G.
Bennet, P.
Bentinck, Lord H.
Beresford, W.
Bernard, Visct.
Blair, S.
Blandford, Marq. of
Boldero, H. G.
Bourke, R. S.
Bramston, T. W.
Brooke, Lord
Buck, L. W.
Christy, S.
Clive, H. B.
Cabbold, J. C.
Cole, hon. H. A.
Coles, H. B.
Compton, H. C.
Corry, rt. hon. H. L.
Currie, H.
Davies, D. A. S.
Deedes, W.
Dod, J. W.
Drumlanrig, Visct.
Drummond, H.
Duncombe, hon. O.
Duncuft, J.
Dundas, G.
Du Pre, C. G.
Edwards, H.
Egerton, Sir P.
Estcourt, J. B. B.
Farrer, J.
Ffolliott, J.
Floyer, J.
Forester, hon. G. C. W.
Fox, S. W. L.
Gooch, E. S.
Goulburn, rt. hon. H.
Granby, Marq. of
Greene, T.
Gwyn, H.
Heneage, G. H. W.
Henley, J. W.
Hildyard, R. C.
Hildyard, T. B. T.
Hodgson, W. N.
Hood, Sir A.
Hope, Sir J.
Hope, A.
Hotham, Lord
Jocelyn, Visct.
Jolliffe, Sir W. G. H.
Jones, Capt.
Knox, Col.
Legh, G. C.
Lindsay, hon. Col.
Lockhart, A. E.
Lockhart, W.
Lopes, Sir R.
Lowther, H.
Macnaghten, Sir E.
Mandeville, Visct.
Manners, Lord G.
March, Earl of
Masterman, J.
Maxwell, hon. J. P.
Meux, Sir H.
Miles, P. W. S.
Miles, W.
Moody, C. A.
Morgan, O.
Mullings, J. R.
Napier, J.
Neeld, J.
Newdegate, C. N.
Newry and Morne, Visct.
Ossulston, Lord
Pakington, Sir J.
Palmer, R.
Plowden, W. H. C.
Prime, R.
Raphael, A.
Renton, J. C.
Repton, G. W. J.
Richards, R.
Rushout, Capt.
Seymer, H. K.
Sibthorp, Col.
Simeon, J.
Spooner, R.
Stafford, A.
Stanley, E.
Stuart, H.
Stuart, J.
Taylor, T. E.
Thornhill, G.
Tollemache, J.
Trevor, hon. G. R.
Turner, G. J.
Tyrell, Sir J. T.
Verner, Sir W.
Waddington, H. S.
Walpole, S. H.
Walsh, Sir J. B.
Wellesley, Lord C.
Wodehouse, E.

TELLERS.

Law, hon. C. E.
Plumptre, J. P.

House in Committee.

Mr. BERNAL in the chair; Motion made and Question proposed—

> "That it is expedient to alter the oaths required to be taken by the subjects of Her Majesty not professing the Roman Catholic religion as qualifications for sitting and voting in Parliament, and to make provision in respect of the said oaths for the relief of Her Majesty's subjects professing the Jewish religion."

The question having been put,

Mr. BANKES said, he understood the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) had no wish to proceed further to-night. A division was not expected, and had come upon them with surprise. He hoped, therefore, the noble Lord would consent to the Chairman reporting progress.

Lord J. RUSSELL had no wish to proceed further that night if the hon. Gentleman objected.

Committee report progress.

House adjourned at half-after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, February 20, 1849.

Minutes.] Public Bills.—1ª Habeas Corpus Suspension (Ireland).

Reported.—Conveyance of Real Property Act Amendment.

House adjourned to Thursday next.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, February 20, 1849.

Minutes.] Public Bills.—1° Life Policies of Assurance; Affirmation; Overseers (Cities and Boroughs); Outdoor Paupers.

2° Consolidated Fund (8,000,000*l.*); Commons Inclosure.

Petitions Presented. By Mr. Hume, from John Childs, of Bungay, in the County of Suffolk, for an Alteration of the Law respecting the Printing of Bibles.—By Sir Joshua Walmsley, from the Independent Dissenters of Bolton-le-Moors, and several other Places, for an Alteration of the Law as regards the Church of England Clergy.—By Mr. Page Wood, from Augustus Johann Hoffstaedt, of No. 4, New Bridge Street, Blackfriars, London, for Substituting Affirmations instead of Oaths.—By Mr. Robert Palmer, from several Places in Berkshire, against the Endowment of the Roman Catholic Clergy.—By Sir Lucius O'Brien, from Glamorganshire, to Facilitate the great object of Emigration.—By Mr. Duncan, from the Royal Burgh of Dundee, for Reduction in the Public Expenditure.—By Mr. Brotherton, from the Birkenhead, Lancashire, and Cheshire Junction Railway Company, respecting the Taxation on Railways.—By Mr. Cobden, from the Borough of Sheffield, for a Repeal of the Duty on Windows.—By Lord Dudley Stuart, from Leominster, for an Alteration of the Law for Regulating Highways.—By Mr. Fuller, from the Board of Guardians of the Eastbourne Union, and from several other Unions, for the Suppression of Mendicancy.—By Mr. Lushington, from the Jurymen on the Trial of George Bridge Mullens, for a Commutation of his Sentence.—From Shipowners, Tradesmen, and Others, connected with the Ports of Alloa and Kincardine, against the Repeal of the Navigation Laws.—By Mr. Lushington, from a Meeting held in the Temperance Hall, Broadway, Westminster, for Alteration of the Poor Law.—By Mr. Shafto Adair, from a Meeting held in the Town Hall, Cambridge, for the Suppression of the Slave Trade.—By Lord Dudley Stuart, from Members of the Literary and Scientific Institution, John Street, Fitzroy Square, for Referring War Dispntes to Arbitration.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE.

Mr. M. MILNES asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department—first, whether Her Majesty's Government had taken any means to rescue the national records of this country from the disgraceful and dangerous state in which they now were, by the erection of a public Record Office, and for which the land was appropriated and the plans of the building laid out?

Sir G. GREY replied, that as to the Record Office, steps were taken last year to procure a site, but he could not speak positively that the building had been decided upon.

Mr. BANKES asked if it was not intended that the great tower in the new Houses of Parliament should be set apart for that purpose?

Sir G. GREY believed that such an intention had been entertained, but it was now abandoned.

THE PALACE COURT.

Mr. HUME, seeing the Attorney General in his place, wished to know whether Government were taking any steps to reform the nuisance existing in the Palace Court, respecting which some anxiety existed?

The **ATTORNEY GENERAL** said, that the subject was not within his province. It more properly belonged to the Lord Steward of the Household; but in consequence of a communication which that noble Lord had done him the honour to make to him on this subject, a measure would be introduced, which he hoped would be effectual to remedy the evils complained of.

COLONIAL SYSTEM—CEYLON AND BRITISH GUIANA.

Motion made, and Question proposed—

"That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the grievances complained of in the Crown Colonies of Ceylon and British Guiana, and to report to the House whether any measures can be adopted for the better Administration and Government of those Dependencies."

Mr. BAILLIE said, he did not think it was necessary to offer any apology for bringing forward the present Motion, for he believed that a general feeling had long prevailed in the public mind of this country, that the Colonial Office was incapable to discharge with advantage the great and important duties which were entrusted to it. The public would not fail to perceive that for a series of years there had been a succession of Colonial Ministers appointed in this country—men of the greatest talent and ability—no one of whom had succeeded in gaining the confidence of the inhabitants of the colonies, in giving satisfaction to this country, or in gaining credit for himself or for the Government with which he was connected. And assuredly after the painful exposures which took place last Session of Parliament, it would not be contended that the present Secretary of State for the Colonies had been more fortunate than his predecessors, notwithstanding the high expectations which were formed in the breasts of our colonial fellow-subjects, in consequence of his previous declarations with respect to our colonial government. Mr. Montgomery Martin, in his *History of the British Colonies*, remarked that within the short space of two years, four Secretaries of the Colonies had been appointed in Downing-street. Four Under Secretaries of State had been appointed in the same time; and Mr. Montgomery Martin very sensibly added—"I ask any unprejudiced man how the colonies can be well governed under such a system?" But it was not his (Mr. Baillie's) intention to enter into any discussion with reference to the management or the details of the Colonial Office. He had no wish to make any comment either on their remissness, or on their neglect of the performance of those duties which have been committed to them. He had a more serious and important accusation to bring before the House, for he charged the Colonial Office with tyranny and oppression — tyranny towards those colonies and dependencies which, having no constitutional form of government or system of representation, were wholly at the mercy of the Colonial Office, and totally dependent on the will and pleasure of its chief. He (Mr. Baillie) charged the Colonial Office with a wasteful and extravagant expenditure of the colonial resources, rendering it necessary to impose burdens upon the colonies, which, in the altered circumstances of those colonies, were now become altogether intolerable, and were the fruitful sources of that discontent which now so unhappily prevailed. There could not be a doubt that much of the discontent which existed in the colonies had arisen from the extravagant notions which were entertained at home, that colonial government ought to be a model of our own; and those persons formed their opinions from the costly and expensive institutions of the mother country, being totally ignorant of the wants and necessities, as well as of the feelings and opinions, of the colonists. How would they apply a remedy to this state of things, till they conceded to the colonies the complete control of their own expenditure, and the entire management of their own affairs? An hon. Gentleman who was examined before a Committee of the House of Commons during the last Session of Parliament, and who was eminently qualified to form an opinion upon the subject, for he had been fifteen years Colonial Secretary at Ceylon (Mr. Philip Anstruther), was examined before the Committee on Coffee and Sugar Plantations, with respect to the financial situation of Ceylon, and the question being put to him as to the possible reduction of expenditure in that colony, Mr. Anstruther says:—

> "It is impossible to say to what extent the expenditure may not be reduced, if you are determined to cut your coat according to your cloth. There is hardly a limit; I do not know that the colony would be worse administered at half the cost; but the fault of all our colonies, as far as we know, is, that every colony is a miniature of the Imperial Government—we must have a treasury, and we must have an audit office, and all these are highly paid; indeed it is a mere caricature, it is very much so; but the Colonial Office might change its system entirely."

He (Mr. Baillie) quite agreed with this gentleman, that the Colonial Office might change its system entirely; but he (Mr. Baillie) went farther, and said the Colonial Office must change its system entirely. He (Mr. Baillie) said, "You Gentlemen of the Colonial Office, by the impedients you have thrown in the way of colonial progress, you have reduced the colonies to a state of poverty and ruin, and you must not now be astonished if the colonies are determined to cut their coat according to their cloth, and to appear in the habiliments of paupers." Before proceeding farther, perhaps it would be well that he (Mr. Baillie) should quote the opinion of another gentleman, who ought to be considered of high authority, especially by Her Majesty's Government, for they had promoted him to a place of high responsibility. He alluded to Mr. Herman Merivale, the permanent Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, and the gentleman who, he presumed, was the chief manager in the Colonial Office. He was formerly Professor of Political Economy in the University of Oxford, and he was promoted to his present position in consequence of the able views which he had published on colonial government. He (Mr. Baillie) found in that gentleman's lectures on colonisation the views which he (Mr. Merivale) entertained with respect to the present management of the colonies and the whole colonial system. He says—

> "Our own times are probably the first in which the governing body, in large States, has sought to acquire strength by multiplying dependants on the public purse; a matter of state-craft now well understood in some great European kingdoms. Under our old colonial system, no temptation whatever was held out to self-interest, assuming the mask of patriotism—the commonest form of hypocrisy in these days. The expense of the civil establishment in Massachusetts' Bay, before the commencement of the American war, was estimated by Adam Smith at about 18,000*l.* a year; that of New Hampshire and Rhode Island, 3,500*l.* each; that of Connecticut, 4,000*l.*; that of New

York and Pennsylvania, 4,500*l.* each; that of New Jersey, 1,200*l.*; that of Virginia and South Carolina, 8,000*l.* each: total, 55,200*l.*"

He then compared the civil expenditure of the colonies in 1836 with the revenue, and went on to observe—

"an ever memorable example at how small an expense 3,000,000 of people may not only be governed, but well governed."

He then stated the civil expenditure of our North American colonies in 1836, and continued—

"If this enormous difference were compensated by superior government, I, for one, should be little disposed to cavil at the amount of the sums which the people of the colonies are called on to advance for the purchase of so inestimable a blessing. But I might safely ask those who entertain the highest notions of government and its duties, whether any of its functions, moral or material, are better fulfilled in our colonies of the present day than they were in the ancient American provinces?"

Such were the opinions of the political economist. He (Mr. Baillie) knew not what might be the opinion of the now Member of the Government (Mr. Merivale). He knew not whether that gentleman was subject to that weakness of human nature which seemed always to beset those who became Members of Government; but this he would say, that the sensitive feelings of the gentleman must have been rudely shocked, if, believing as he did that 3,000,000 of people could be not only governed, but well governed, at a cost of 55,200*l.* a year, he found upon his introduction to the Colonial Office that the colony of British Guiana, with 120,000 inhabitants, cost 273,000*l.* a year for its civil administration, being an amount equal to 2*l.* 6*s.* a head for every living soul in the colony, or one-sixth more than the cost per head to the people of the mother country. It should be borne in mind, too, that the people of this country are the most heavily taxed people upon the face of the earth. But here were people who, without the cost of an army or a navy, were taxed one-sixth more as colonists than the people of the mother country. Such, then, were the grounds upon which he (Mr. Baillie) should venture to pray for the indulgence of the House whilst he proceeded to detail the case which he had to bring forward; and it would be then for the House to decide whether he had made out a sufficient one for the Committee he sought for. It was well known that the British colonies were subject to various forms of government. Some were provided with legislative assemblies, and a form of popular representation; some with only a slight approach to a representative system; and there were others, fewer still, who were governed by a pure and simple despotism, subject only to the supreme will and pleasure—or caprice would be probably the most fitting word—of an individual who, as the force of party might prevail in this country, should find himself placed in the position of Secretary of State for the Colonies. It was to this latter class of colonies that he (Mr. Baillie) wished to direct the attention of the House; and amongst that class which were subjected to pure and simple despotism they might place the important colony of Ceylon. He placed it in that category, its legislative administration being confided to a governor and council, every member of which council was named either by the governor himself, or by the Secretary of State for the Colonies in this country. They therefore had a form of government without any pretence of representation; and in consequence of alleged abuses arising therefrom, very great discontent had prevailed in the colony. That discontent existed not only amongst the native, but amongst the European population, and had lately manifested itself amongst the native population in the only way in which an uneducated and ignorant people were accustomed to make remonstrances to a Government, namely, in the shape of an open demonstration of rebellion. It had also shown itself amongst the European population; but in the more civilised form of memorials to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and petitions to that House. He would read a few passages from one of the petitions addressed to that House, in order that the House might know what were the grievances of which the colonists complained. The petitioners were merchants, planters, and traders of the island of Ceylon, and they stated—

"That your petitioners are deeply interested in the welfare of this island, in which their property is invested, their means of living procured, and now address your honourable House under a sense of suffering no ordinary hardship and injustice. Your petitioners are labouring under a burden of excessive taxation disproportionate to their means of payment, and consider that the revenues of the island are diverted to many objects with which they should not properly be burdened. That the administration of the law is tortuous and uncertain; the delays unavoidable in civil suits amount in many cases to a denial of justice, and the appointment of judges at the principal towns who have never studied or practised the law, from other branches of the public service, to seats in our first courts of civil jurisdiction, though often complained of by your petitioners, still continues. That the constitution of the Council of this island does not lead your petitioners to hope for any amelioration through their means. The unpaid unofficial members, who are the nominees of the Governor, are powerless to originate any measure; and, judging from the past, your petitioners have no hope in them for the future, as they do not enjoy the confidence of the community. That many of your petitioners have invested large sums in the cultivation of coffee and the purchase of real property, and they now find their attempts to develop the resources of the island have turned out most disastrously: more than one-third of the estates in the island have lately changed owners by forced sales, at, in most instances, not a tithe of their cost. The best household properties in the Fort of Colombo and other large towns have been depreciated 40 or 50 per cent, and rents have fallen in proportion. Whilst these circumstances have caused great loss and suffering to your petitioners, they observe, with deep regret, an increase in the expenditure of the colony, the maintenance of useless sinecure offices, and the institution of new offices, whilst many already in existence have no adequate duties to perform. To bring the expenditure within the income, public works of the first necessity, such as the repair of roads, have been entirely suspended; expenditure being nearly confined to the payment of salaries. That the price of ordinary Ceylon coffee in the London market has fallen from 100*s.* per cwt. in 1839 and 1840, to 28*s.* per cwt. at the date of the last advices which your petitioners have received. That the great bulk of the plantation kinds have experienced nearly a similar depreciation; and plantations are, consequently, being maintained at a loss, which cannot long be borne by their owners, and is resulting in their total abandonment."

They then proceeded to complain that the produce of their colony was subjected to a duty of 37*s.* 4*d.* per cwt., which was 200 per cent on its importation into this country. This was a pretty specimen of the free-traders' justice. They opened their ports for free trade to Europe and America, whilst they laid 200 per cent upon the produce of their own colonies. There were various other complaints in the petition, into which he (Mr. Baillie) would not then go. He merely stated the principal subjects. Such, then, was the state of the island of Ceylon when Lord Torrington was sent out as Governor in the commencement of the year 1848. He found the colony labouring under great depression. Distress universally prevailed. Estates in which large capitals had been invested, were every day being brought to execution sales, or altogether abandoned by the owners. The revenue of the colony had fallen below its expenditure, so that danger existed that funds would not be forthcoming sufficient to pay even the officers of the State. In short, Lord Torrington found financial affairs much in the same condition in Ceylon as he had left them at home in the mother country—there was a deficit in the Exchequer; and he seemed to think that he should follow as closely as possible the example of the Chancellor of the Exchequer at home—of that right hon. Baronet whom he (Mr. Baillie) was sorry not to see then in his place. Well, Lord Torrington being, as he presumed, a free-trader, did not appear to have contemplated any increase in the import duties; and being also a Whig, without the fear of a financial reform association before his eyes, nothing remained for him but to follow the example of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in this country, and to propose an increase of direct taxation. Not having the example of an income-tax ready made to his hands, which he might have proposed to his Council at once to double in amount, he was obliged to have recourse to other resources; and, on the spur of the moment, he appeared to have hit upon a financial scheme which was, of all others, the most impracticable to be carried into effect, and which was, at the same time, the most obnoxious to the inhabitants of Ceylon. He published an ordinance for the imposition of four new taxes—a poll-tax for the construction of roads, a tax upon all the shops of the colony, a tax upon guns, and a tax upon dogs. And they were assured by Lord Torrington, in a speech addressed to his Council, that those taxes had received the full concurrence and sanction of Earl Grey; but he (Lord Torrington), at the same time, stated, that it was not his intention to press the measure, for a reason which must certainly be admitted to be a valid one—namely, that the taxes were not likely to increase the revenue. Now, it was unfortunate that the discovery was not made at an earlier period, because it would have saved Earl Grey from giving his approval to a system of taxation which was not likely to increase the revenue, and was very likely to increase the discontent of the people; and it would have saved the colony from the horrors and miseries of a popular outbreak, because the manner in which those taxes were levied was the cause—the immediate cause—of the late rebellion. This was shown, first of all, by a memorial from nearly all the merchants, planters, and traders of Colombo, who memorialised Earl Grey upon the subject. It should be recollected that they were not interested parties, for the taxes were not levied upon them. They said—

"Under the extreme and painful depression of the colony in every branch of trade and enterprise, as well as a decreasing revenue, your memorialists have felt that it was not an increase of taxation that was called for, so much as a diminution in the heavy expenditure which pervades every department of the colonial government. Were opportunity afforded, your memorialists could point out many instances where wholesome reform and legitimate retrenchments might be made without in the least affecting the efficiency of the Executive. But in the midst of the increasing difficulties of the colony, the colonial government have not only in one session, and together, imposed four taxes of a novel character, but levied them in so objectionable and vexatious a manner as to irritate the people, and urge them to seek redress by personal appeals to his Excellency the Governor, and by petitions to Her Majesty, while, unhappily, too many have made them but a cloak for their own seditious and disloyal purposes. Your memorialists are far from imputing any blame to the local government for originating the taxes in question ; but they most respectfully submit, that the fault lay in the provisions of the ordinances which legalised them, and subsequently vexatious manner in which they have been brought into operation. The four new taxes referred to are — 1st, the gun-tax ; 2nd, the shop or boutique-tax ; 3rd, the dog-tax ; and, 4th, the labour or poll-tax. The first of these (the gun-tax) compels the owner to pay 2*s.* 6*d.* annually for a license for each gun. Already the new tariff had provided that, in lieu of 5 per cent *ad valorem*, 5*s.* should be paid on the importation of every gun, thus establishing an increase to the purchaser of from 5 to 33 per cent on a gun costing 15*s.* But, independent of a tax already so heavily increased, the mode in which the additional tax of 2*s.* 6*d.* has been levied, is one that has called forth the greatest amount of dissatisfaction and condemnation from all parties, and has been made the first ostensible cause of excitement and revolt in the interior. The owners of the guns have been required to attend at Colombo, Kandy, or Galle, from the utmost limits of the province in which they were respectively situated, some extending to forty miles or more ; the illiterate owner was then required to put in his written application—and in English—for a license. The native had no alternative but apply to a writer at hand to make out the application, for which he was compelled to pay, in some instances 6*d.*, in others 3*d.*; and he returned to his village after several days of loss in travelling, and payment of from 2*s.* 9*d.* to 3*s.*, until the following year, when he must renew his license and his trouble. With such undue provision for its collection was this tax brought into operation, that in the first instance the villagers were kept a week or more from their homes, whilst others were obliged to perform their journey several times for the one object, solely because due provision had not been made for issuing the licenses."

Now, it was remarkable that, although Lord Torrington had stigmatised the memorialists as bankrupts the most of them, and as being quite unworthy of notice— [Mr. Hawes: No, no!] Yes he did. [Mr. Hawes: Quote the words of the despatch.] He (Mr. Baillie) deemed it unnecessary. It was sufficient to state, that Lord Torrington, when he afterwards thought it advisable to repeal those taxes, made use of the very same arguments which those people had used in their memorial to Earl Grey. He (Mr. Baillie) alluded to Lord Torrington's despatch in which he wrote to Earl Grey for the purpose of communicating the fact that he had repealed the taxes. And it had so happened, that Earl Grey's despatch, in which he fully approved of them, crossed the very one of Lord Torrington's in which their repeal was mentioned. The words were as follows:—

"This ordinance has since been brought into operation, and I am bound to confess that difficulties have been experienced in carrying out its details, which can be thoroughly appreciated only by those resident on the spot, and which have arisen in a great degree out of native habits and customs, and from that mistrust of each other, combined with ignorance and timidity, which it is almost impossible to eradicate from the minds and feelings of the people. By way of illustration of this remark, I would mention the fact, that instead of one man bringing a number of guns to be registered for himself and his neighbours, every man from a whole district would come out the same day and hour, to the number of several hundred persons, making it utterly impossible for the agent to register their guns on that or the next day, by which arrangement numbers of people would be kept waiting at a considerable expense to themselves and loss of time; and no exertions or representations of the officers of Government could succeed in remedying or preventing this inconvenience. The tax was equal to 20 or 25 per cent upon the value of a great majority of the guns possessed by the natives, of which, indeed, many were utterly useless and valueless, except as curiosities, which had been kept as heir-looms in their families. Again, it has been ascertained that the people in many instances preferred destroying their guns, that others had concealed them, and that it was in fact very difficult in a wild country to compel the people to come in to register fire-arms. It was found, also, that dishonest pedlars had in many instances circulated delusive reports amongst the natives, by which means they had persuaded them to sell their guns absolutely for a mere trifle. Although I have little doubt that the tax could be collected next year with less difficulty, I am nevertheless sensible that some discontent and annoyance might arise from the attempt to enforce it, and I am bound to admit that the revenue hitherto derived from it has not been so large as I anticipated, although I have reason to believe that the actual number of guns was not over-estimated in my previous calculations. That a registration is necessary is beyond a doubt; and I have, with the unanimous concurrence of my Executive Council, recommended that the Bill of last Session should be amended by striking out the word annual; thus leaving it compulsory on all parties possessing fire-arms to register them, but only requiring one registration and one payment. By this alteration I have every reason to believe that the registration will be easily completed, and that the measure will now be willingly adopted by the people. By this means one ground for discontentment will be done away with."

Lord Torrington went on to speak about the dog ordinance and the shop license. He (Mr. Baillie) would not go into the details upon those subjects, because hon. Members had already read them. But the fact was apparent, that those ordinances were the cause of the rebellion. It did not, however, appear that the rebellion was very formidable in its nature, or very extensive in its ramifications. The people seemed to have set up a sort of king for themselves like the Irish, and, like the Irish, they seemed to have abandoned him in the hour of need; but the rebellion was quelled without any loss to Her Majesty's troops. As the hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Hawes) had said last year—

> "The rebellion had been very much exaggerated. In point of fact, the troops had been called out for show more than for real use."

And now he (Mr. Baillie) came to that part of the transaction which it was impossible to refer to without pain, which it was impossible to mention without calling up a blush into the cheek of every Englishman. He alluded to the severities practised upon the people after the rebellion had been suppressed. They had heard a good deal at one time about the severities practised by Prince Windischgrätz at Vienna, when, it would be remembered, the newspapers, especially those that supported Her Majesty's Government, severely censured that general for his harshness. Now, the rebellion at Vienna had been accompanied by every atrocity that could be conceived, and it was only suppressed after a long and arduous struggle, and an enormous sacrifice of human life: and all that they had heard of the after severities was, that two or three of the leaders had been executed. What said a newspaper which was said to be conducted by a Member of Her Majesty's Government, upon the subject of the execution of Blum?—The *Economist*, speaking of Blum, said—

> "The most conspicuous act of violence committed by the Austrian Government is the execution of Blum at Vienna. We are not disposed to think much of the sanctity with which the gentlemen at Frankfort have endeavoured to hedge round their persons, by declaring them inviolate. Every Member of the English Parliament may be prosecuted and punished for crimes, as witness Mr. Smith O'Brien; and why not, therefore, Robert Blum and the Frankfort deputies? We do not find fault with his execution because he was a deputy; but in the present state of political excitement, when old authorities have deservedly forfeited much respect, when men are almost everywhere eagerly seeking after political improvement, having no worse motives than those who adhere to the old systems, it is impolitic to begin executions for any kind of political action. If Blum had been one of Latour's murderers, hang him by all means; but being only a violent democrat, who had assisted his brother democrats in the defence of their cause, after that cause was vanquished there was no necessity nor reason for putting him to death. So the act seems to have been appreciated in Germany; and while it has sullied the fair fame of Windischgrätz, it has done more than even the march of Jellachich to kindle the anger of all Germany against the power of the Emperor. The particular instance illustrates the general principle, that in the present state of doubt as to political institutions, and with the present general conviction of the fallibility of statesmen, it is wise to be forbearing, and not to enforce by the sword the supremacy of a power which may be founded in error, and soon, in turn, humbled with the dust. We cannot admit the asserted effect of example in such cases. Executions have not deterred men from vile and execrable crimes. They have been given up for many penal offences, because they were gratuitous cruelty. Political offences of the kind committed by Blum have no shame attached to them. Men are often encouraged to commit them by the applause of their fellows; and when executions do not deter from crimes that are connected with shame and infamy, they are not likely to deter from actions that are honoured and applauded. They induce reprisals, and one such execution, instead of stopping revolts, is more likely to lead to a long train of assassinations."

This writer had heard, it seemed, of executions at Vienna, but had never heard of anything of the kind under the paternal influence of the Colonial Office. He had never heard of the establishment of martial law in Ceylon, or of the executions that had taken place under those military tribunals. But the House had been furnished with returns of those executions, and they found that eighteen men were executed under martial law, besides a vast number of others having been sentenced to different degrees of banishment. And he (Mr. Baillie) confessed he was surprised, on looking over the list of offences for which they had been sentenced, to find that men should have been condemned under such charges. He would read a few extracts upon that subject. They found—

> "Kaddapolla Unnanse, first, for directly or indirectly holding correspondence with rebels, and not giving all the information in his power which might lead to the apprehension of a proclaimed rebel" [that was for not choosing to betray his friend], "he professing to know his place of concealment on or about the 17th of August, 1848; secondly, for administering or conniving at the administration of a treasonable oath to one Kirri

Bandia, on or about the 17th of August, 1848. Found guilty, sentenced to be shot to death; sentence carried into effect at seven o'clock A. M., 26th of August, 1848."

Then came four other men with very long names, for having appeared in company with an armed assemblage, headed by one Dingeralla, calling himself a king. Found guilty. Sentence, that the whole of the prisoners be shot to death; the sentence was carried into immediate execution. Now, those people were not charged with rebellion, but merely with having been found with an armed band, and, strange to say, the very man in whose company they were charged with being—the mock king Dingeralla—was himself tried subsequently, recommended to mercy, and sentenced merely to transportation. It appeared, indeed, that those executions were carried on with no less brutality than haste. And he (Mr. Baillie) used the word brutality advisedly, for one of the executions, the particulars of which he would read, fully justified the expression. The account he was about to read was taken from the *Colombo Observer*, which was the newspaper of the largest circulation in Ceylon; and, indeed, he might say, that Lord Torrington himself had confirmed the statement in speaking of the executions. In speaking of the execution of a priest, the *Colombo Observer*, of the 1st of November, 1848, said—

"The courts-martial, for which there is no redress, form the saddest part of the dark and bloody tragedy. Three or four European officers, utterly ignorant of the mode of conducting such inquiries, participating in the surrounding excitement, and utterly ignorant of native character, in a country where the highest judicial authority has declared perjury to be the rule, correct evidence the exception—under such circumstances, we say, it was not likely that truth would be patiently searched out, and innocence protected. We have heard a gentleman who was engaged on some investigation, declare that he was most painfully situated. He had heard of the character of the people, and that, notwithstanding all the acumen of judges and lawyers, the civil courts frequently came to erroneous conclusions; and yet here it was necessary to decide off-hand on the guilt or innocence of a fellow-creature, and life or death in a few hours was in the balance. Witnesses came up and swore point blank, but whether to believe them or disbelieve them he did not know, there being about as much reason for the one conclusion as the other. The court-martial upon the priest, who was shot in his robes at Kandy, may, we suppose, be taken as a fair specimen of these tribunals. He was accused of administering an oath of secrecy regarding the pretender's place of concealment. There were only two witnesses against him, a father and son, who, as the bystanders knew (though the members of the court-martial were ignorant of the fact), appeared under very suspicious circumstances, one of them being in some way a candidate for a Government situation. Of course they deposed as to the oath; but even in the cross-examination, such as the officers were able to make, the bystanders, who understand the habits of the people, perceived material discrepancies. At the conclusion of the trial several legal practitioners who were present, and therefore thoroughly convinced of the priest's innocence, called upon the Queen's Advocate, and so satisfied him as to the correctness of their views, that he waited upon the Governor, who happened to be then in Kandy. The interview could, however, have been no more agreeable than it was successful, for the Queen's Advocate returned, apparently greatly mortified at the reception he met with, and informed the gentlemen who had so humanely interested themselves, that at all hazards the Governor had determined the priest should be shot, and he was shot accordingly next morning. The feeling that pervaded the Governor's mind may be gathered from the indecent refusal of this poor priest's dying request, not to be shot in his sacerdotal habiliments. The man had a perfect right to die in any dress he pleased, and not only was this right violated, but an insult offered to the followers of the Buddhist faith, by compelling him to wear his inner priestly dress. It is now, however, universally believed that this priest was entirely innocent—that he had had no communication whatever with the King. He was a low-countryman, who had lately settled in the interior; was known to few of the people, and not likely to be entrusted with any of their secrets; and even the pretender, it is now said, declares he knew nothing whatever of him, and was not concealed at any time in the same part of the country where the priest resided."

Now he (Mr. Baillie) put entirely out of view the question of the guilt or innocence of the man. He assumed that he was guilty. But the mode and manner of his execution were alike an outrage upon humanity and religion; and had such an act been committed at Madrid, under General Narvaez, we should never have heard the last of it. Indeed, it was only in Spain that we could hear of such transactions as had been lately committed in Ceylon. But, in order to appreciate the acts and feelings of Lord Torrington, it was necessary to refer to his correspondence with the Chief Justice of Ceylon (Sir A. Oliphant). It seemed, that as soon as the courts-martial were suspended, the ordinary tribunals came into operation again, and the remainder of the prisoners were tried in the Supreme Court at Kandy before the Chief Justice. Fourteen of those men were condemned to death by the Chief Justice, who communicated the fact in a letter to the Governor, Lord Torrington, dated September 23, 1848, which he (Mr. Baillie) would read to the House. After setting forth the names of the persons, he went on to say—

"Under different circumstances I should have recommended your Excellency to have executed such three or four of those last mentioned as should, after minute investigation into their respective cases by the law officers of the Crown, have appeared to have been most guilty. To have carried out the last penalty of the law against these, would have been necessary for the vindication of justice, order, and good government, and for an example to others. But I find that that example has been already made. I learn that some twenty persons have been already shot for their share in this rebellion by courts-martial. I therefore think—when it is considered no one European has been put to death, that one soldier only has been wounded by the rebels, that no persons have appeared in warlike array against the troops since the outbreak at Matelle and Kurnegalle—that the blood which has been already spilt is sufficient for all purposes, whether of vindication of the law or for example."

Now what was the answer of Lord Torrington? He (Mr. Baillie) would read it:—

"Queen's House, Colombo, Sep. 25, 1846.

"Sir—I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the 23rd inst., transmitting the notes of evidence and sentences of death passed on the prisoners convicted of high treason at the late session of the Supreme Court held at Kandy, for the special purpose of trying persons implicated in the late rebellion. I have given to this communication not only the respectful attention becoming your high authority, but that painful and anxious consideration inseparable from the solemn question of life and death suggested by your general recommendation of all the prisoners for a commutation of their punishments. But, after soliciting the advice and opinions of the Executive Council, it is with great reluctance that I find myself unable to concur with you in the propriety of that course towards some of those men convicted in due course of law, and whose guilt has been so clearly established, that the strict line of your duty, uninfluenced by other considerations, would have led you, as you state, to recommend to me to inflict upon them the last penalty of the law, in vindication of justice, order, and good government. These considerations, I must observe, are unconnected with the judicial question on which it was properly within your province to assist me with your advice; but, irrespective of this, I am compelled to say that neither they nor the reasoning founded on them, which has induced you to adopt a different line, in recommending these parties to mercy, has produced the same result in my mind; whilst, at the same time, such publicity has unfortunately been given to your opinions on this subject as would involve the Government in embarrassment, were I to set aside your recommendation to mercy, and leave these individuals for execution. On the other hand, I foresee much practical inconvenience likely to result from this summary review of all the proceedings of the highest civil tribunal in the island, followed by a sweeping modification of its judgment upon men convicted of the gravest offences known to our laws. Upon a deliberate calculation, however, of the comparative evils of either course, and feeling strongly the disadvantage at which I am placed in acting on my own judgment, I have deemed it best to lean to the side of mercy, and to adopt so much of your recommendation as regards the commutation of all capital punishments, substituting transportation for life in the instance of those convicts who have not been recommended to mercy by the juries, and transportation for fourteen years in all the other cases.

(Signed) "TORRINGTON."

Now, it appeared from this document that Lord Torrington had been compelled, against his will, to temper justice with mercy. One would have thought that he would have felt a deep obligation to the man who would have relieved him from the awful responsibility of deciding between the life and death of a fellow-creature. It was not so, however. And further, they found that not only execution, but confiscation of property, was the order of the day. A proclamation, signed by the island secretary, Sir J. E. Tennant, dated August 18, 1848, was issued, which said—

"That the lands and property of all persons who shall, after this 18th day of August, 1848, be found to have been absent from their ordinary places of residence during the last twenty days, without giving a satisfactory account of themselves, will be declared forfeited and confiscated to the Crown."

Now, it appeared from the admissions of Lord Torrington himself, that such was the haste with which the proclamation was carried into effect, that not only were properties confiscated, but they were actually sold, and the owners of some of them were subsequently proved to have been innocent. Lord Torrington, indeed, said that those persons' properties should be restored to them. But how was that to be done? They could not restore property after it had been sold. They might, indeed, hand over the proceeds of the sale; but what sort of compensation would that be to persons whose properties had been sold in a hurry, for probably one-fourth of their value? And these were the measures that had been sanctioned and approved of by Earl Grey, and by which he hoped to make good, and happy, and faithful subjects to Her Majesty. But there was another matter of which they heard nothing from the blue book. Lord Torrington had at last discovered that he was acting illegally, and that it was necessary to get an act of indemnity, to save not only himself, but all those who were acting under his orders, from the consequences of those proceedings. The Council was accordingly summoned, and a Bill of Indemnity was laid before them. Now, that Council, as he (Mr. Baillie) had said before, was composed of men wholly and entirely nominated by the Governor and the Colonial Office. Out of fourteen men comprising that Council, eight were official men, and six were non-official. Yet the Council so composed were actually divided equally in opinion whether they would pass the Bill of Indemnity. Seven voted for and seven against, and the Bill was actually carried at last by the casting vote of Lord Torrington himself—Sir James Emerson Tennent, the Colonial Secretary, having declined to vote at all upon the occasion. There could not have been a greater proof of the weight of feeling of the colonists than such conduct upon a question of vital importance to the character of the Government. He (Mr. Baillie) thought he had now shown that the colony of Ceylon was in a very unsatisfactory condition, and that a Parliamentary inquiry was due to the colonists into the evils they complained of. He had shown them the general discontent which prevailed, not only amongst the natives, but amongst the European population. He had shown them the state of financial disorder which existed in a colony possessing 450,000*l.* of revenue, but which had yet been declared by the Governor unable to meet its expenditure, and which had been thrown into a state of rebellion by attempts to impose additional burdens and additional taxes. He had shown them that the English residents complained of a most defective system in the administration of justice. He had shown them that there evidently existed a most wasteful expenditure of public money; and he had shown them a Governor superseding the ordinary tribunals, and establishing martial law without the consent or advice of his Council. He did not know if it was possible to add to this catalogue of complaints; but this he would say, that the noble Lord at the head of the Colonial Department (Earl Grey) had done as great injustice to Lord Torrington as to the colony to which he appointed him. To have appointed an individual without knowledge or experience of colonial government—an individual who had never shown any talent or ability in the conduct of public affairs — an individual who had never filled a post more important than that of Lord of the Bedchamber—to have appointed such an individual to the command of a great and important colony—a colony, too, labouring under peculiar circumstances of distress—such an act was, to say the least of it, one of great injustice to the individual so selected, as well as to the colony in which he was destined to receive the rudiments of his administrative education. He (Mr. Baillie) trusted that the unhappy result of this experiment would act as a warning to those who might in future be intrusted with the high and responsible duty of distributing the patronage of the Crown. He (Mr. Baillie) had now to call the attention of the House to another scene of misgovernment, in which the evils of our colonial system were no less manifest than in Ceylon—he alluded to British Guiana. That settlement was long regarded as one of the most thriving and flourishing of the West Indian colonies; it was blessed with a soil of unbounded fertility and great extent; and people imagined that this was one of the colonies destined to servive the harsh experiments of the mother country. Such, however, was a vain hope. Nothing could withstand the withering influence of the Colonial Office; and British Guiana, with all its natural advantages, was now in a more deplorable condition than any of the West Indian settlements, exhibiting, in their fullest light, the evil effects of misgovernment and neglect on the part of this country. It would be remembered that when negro emancipation took place, the Colonial Office instituted no proceeding to avert or soften the difficulties which every one foresaw must follow. It never occurred to the Colonial Office to pass laws regulating or enforcing contract labour, or promulgating laws for the suppression of vagrancy, and the prevention of squatting. In fact, the Colonial Office left the result to chance. No steps whatever were taken. No measures of any kind were adopted to avert the probable evils arising from the great experiment then about to be tried. The result was most deplorable both for the colony and the mother country. The negroes soon found out that they were the masters of the planters. They exacted the most enormous wages for the least possible amount of work, and indeed gave just as much or as little as they pleased. The planters were entirely at the mercy of their caprice, and were compelled to see their canes rot upon the ground. Under those circumstances the colonists applied to the Government at home to be allowed to import labourers from other countries. They were refused. Meanwhile, however, the Governor of the colony (Sir Henry Light) continued to write home the most flourishing accounts of the prosperous condition of the settlement. "True," he said, "the planters were suffering, but the planters were the few, and the negroes were the many, and the negroes were happy and flourishing;" and well, indeed, might the Governor say so, for by all accounts the negroes were drinking champagne, keeping riding horses, and, as the hon. Member for Dorsetshire (Mr. Bankes) described them, going to work in covered gigs, and, in fact, realising a social El Dorado, as complete as any which had ever been pictured by M. Proudhon or M. Louis Blanc. The result had surprised no one. The only surprise was that ruin could have been so long averted. But it had come at last, and the Colonial Office might now congratulate itself on having accomplished its mission. The ruin of the planters was complete. The value of estates in Guiana had fallen to actually nothing. An estate was sold last year for 2,000*l.* which had cost 24,000*l.*, and with reference to which he had been assured, by a gentleman well qualified to judge, that the copper boilers and other machinery upon the property were alone worth the purchase money. Here, then, was an estate given away. Of course, when such was the state of things, it was natural to suppose that speculators would arise to carry on the cultivation at a loss, and to wait for reimbursement on the chances of the chapter of accidents. This was the way, in fact, in which the plantations were now carried on in Guiana. The proprietors were ruined—the estates were in the hands of merchants in this country, who were for the present carrying them on, waiting for the ultimate result. Now, to prove that he was not exaggerating the state of matters, he would refer the House to Governor Light's despatch, addressed to Earl Grey in August last. The Governor wrote—

> "I believe at this moment, if any person could influence a change in the present stand against the civil list and supplies, it would be myself. Thus are opinions changed. But despair breaks all forms, and unless I am able, by the next mail, to communicate some other concessions to the planters, your Lordship will have to settle their financial difficulties as circumstances demand. The labourers have the money that has been expended on them since emancipation. Whatever be their rise in society hereafter, they are totally unfit now to carry on the cultivation of estates without some responsible head, though they probably will be purchasers of many of the estates as they fall to the law. Civilisation will not benefit by this change of hands, as has been proved on several estates purchased by the negroes on the east coast of Demerara, particularly where the original purchasers have created such disorders by sub-selling and sub-letting, that no combined system of industry—the only possible mode of keeping up a sugar estate—has been followed. Many persons have endeavoured to pursue the *metairie* system since the money crisis, but few have carried it out. The negroes, not being under supervision in which they have confidence, neglect the cultivation."

He (Mr. Baillie) would now proceed to detail the nature of the government of British Guiana. This colony was administered by a governor, and what was called a court of policy. This body consisted of eight persons, four nominated by the governor and four by the planters. To these were added a college of financial representatives, consisting of six persons, elected by the planters, and these two bodies united, formed what was called the Combined Court of British Guiana, which met once a year to vote supplies and to regulate the expenditure of the colony. Well, when this legislature assembled in 1848, they determined that it was necessary to take into consideration the state of the colony, with the view of instituting certain economical reforms, and they came to this resolution not without reason; for in no other colony did there exist abuses to a greater extent. He (Mr. Baillie) held in his hand a list of the public offices in the colony, which were in the gift of the Governor and the Colonial Office. First as to the Governor's patronage. This functionary had at his disposal places to the extent of 37,500*l.* annually, without including those under 250*l.* per annum. He would state a few of these situations. First, there was a receiver general with 2,152*l.*, and an assistant at 694*l.* a year. The next functionary was no less than the sexton of George Town, who received a salary of 1,567*l.* Then there was the high sheriff at only 1,400*l.*, with a clerk at 300*l.*; a customs waiter and searcher, brother of the high sheriff, at 858*l.* a year; a master pilot at 972*l.* a year; a treasurer to the committee of pilotage—the beforementioned tidewaiter—at 458*l.* a year; a collector of rum duties at 1,008*l.* a year; six superintendents of rivers and creeks at 2,083*l.* a year; an administrator-general, receiving in fees 2,952*l.* a year, with an assistant receiving 1,209*l.* a year; eight commissaries of taxation at 325*l.* a year; nine ministers of the Scotch church at 5,311*l.* a year; an inspector of police at 957*l.* a year, with a house, and a clerk at 250*l.* a year; and two sub-inspectors at 389*l.* a year each. All these situations were in the gift of the Governor, irrespective of the civil list. And now for that civil list. It consisted of a governor at 5,000*l.* per annum; a chief justice at

2,500*l.*; the immigration agent at 1,500*l.*; a government secretary at 1,500*l.*; two puisne judges at 3,000*l.*; a registrar of Guiana and a registrar of Berbice at 1,200*l.* a piece; an attorney general at 1,100*l.*; and a high sheriff at 1,200*l.* [An Hon. Member: That is the same high sheriff you referred to before.] No; this is another. A sheriff of Berbice at 1,050*l.*; a sheriff of Essequibo at 841*l.*; a financial accountant at 861*l.*; a harbour master at 1,000*l.*; a solicitor general at 300*l.*; a provost marshal at 214*l.*; an assistant government secretary at 600*l.*, and six stipendiary magistrates at 7,200*l.*, that was to say, at 1,200*l.* for each, the whole making a sum of nearly 39,000*l.* annually in the gift of the Colonial Office. Well, it was proposed that in these salaries there should be some reduction. To this the Governor objected. An altercation ensued, and the Court threatened to stop the supplies. It was, however, ultimately arranged that the supplies should be voted for three months, so as to give the Governor an opportunity of communicating with the Colonial Office; and he would now read to the House an extract from the despatch of Earl Grey, in answer to the communication which he had received, informing him of these events. The despatch of Earl Grey was dated the 17th of June, 1848, and was to this effect:—

> "If the measure—the withholding the supplies—be designed to enforce compliance with a demand for the reduction of the salaries granted to public servants by the civil list ordinance, it is equally unreasonable. I conceive the faith of the Crown and of the colony to be pledged to the public servants for the maintenance of the salaries granted by that ordinance for the period for which it is in force; nor would anything short of an absolute inability to redeem the pledge justify their reduction. But no such necessity exists. Governor Light has shown that the expenditure thus sanctioned (39,000*l.*) amounts to only one-seventh of the whole expenditure (273,000*l.*) of the colony, the Combined Court having complete control over the other six-sevenths, and that the revenue is rather increasing than falling off, and is derived from taxes which press little upon the planters. This proves that there was no occasion for any such measure as that which was pressed upon me—a measure to which, anxious as I am that the strictest economy should be observed in the expenditure of the colonial revenues, I felt it my duty, for the reasons I have stated, to object. At the same time, if any of the offices paid from the civil list should become vacant, I should approve of any proper and practicable reductions which can be made in the salaries attached to them."

Now, it would be observed, that the Colonial Minister justified his refusal to comply with the wishes of the colonists upon two grounds. The first was, that the revenue was sufficient to meet the expenditure; and the second was, that that revenue was derived from sources which did not press heavily upon the colony. But let them inquire for a moment into what were those sources. Why, a tax on a prime necessary of life—a bread tax was the very largest source of income. So here was a Minister who affected to say that the corn laws imposed the most oppressive tax which the country could suffer—writing out to say, that a similar tax was raised with so little difficulty as to justify an extravagant expenditure. The noble Lord (Earl Grey) told them, that the faith of the colony was pledged to the maintenance of the civil list; that an agreement had been made between the Combined Court and the Colonial Office, by which it was stipulated that the civil list should be paid, and that it would be a breach of faith were this stipulation violated—

> "I'll have my bond—I will not hear thee speak:
> I'll have my bond, and, therefore, speak no more.
> I'll not be made a soft and dull-eyed fool,
> To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield
> To Christian intercessors.
> I'll have no speaking—I will have my bond."

Such, then, appeared to be the spirit in which this despatch was written. But now, he had a few words to say as to this agreement. It was clearly proved before the Committee of last year, and that by no less competent a witness than Mr. Barkly, that the engagement was obtained from the colonists under false pretences, and by fraud. Mr. Barkly stated, that when the Colonial Office was anxious to raise the salary of the Governor, they applied to the Colonial Legislature. That body refused to comply; and the Colonial Office then promised that if the increased salary were granted to the Governor, that they would pass an immigration ordinance. On this understanding the Colonial Legislature consented to the wishes of the Office at home. He would state the matter in Mr. Barkly's own words, before the Sugar and Coffee Plantation Committee last year, and the rather as that Gentleman proved by a reference to authorities what he stated. The fact was, that as soon as the required civil list was obtained, the ordinance was refused by the Colonial Office. Mr. Barkly said—

> "I find Mr. H. M'Leod, who was sent down to

Demerara, in consequence of the quarrel between Governor Light and the colonists on the subject, writing thus to Lord J. Russell, on the 23rd May (Parliamentary Papers, British Guiana, 1841):—'To the enactment of the immigration ordinance I gave every facility. It was your Lordship's own promised boon to the colony, so soon as they should have agreed to the civil list question.' Notwithstanding this, as already mentioned, the immigration ordinance was refused, as soon as the civil list was secured."

Now, was it not something wonderful that a Minister should accuse a colony of breach of faith when that breach was on his own side? Surely the colony would be justified in not performing their part of the agreement; but all they did was to appeal in *forma pauperis*—all they said was, that they were compelled to adopt the most rigid economy in expenditure—so that in such circumstances the refusal of the Colonial Office to perform its engagements, appeared to him (Mr. Baillie) to be a piece of most wanton cruelty, not to say one of the most unjust and tyrannical acts which could be committed. But to return to the proceedings of the Combined Court after the receipt of Earl Grey's despatch. The Court immediately assembled, and that despatch was laid before it. The House would remember that the Colonial Minister had stated in it that in the event of any office becoming vacant, he would approve of any reasonable reduction, which could, with the consent of all the parties concerned, be made in the salary of that office. Well, the governorship had become vacant, and the colonists proposed to reduce the salary of the Governor from 5,000*l.* to 3,500*l.* In this they were opposed by the acting Governor, who told them that if they persisted in their project, he had Earl Grey's instructions to adjourn them *sine die.* They did persist, and they were so adjourned, and British Guiana had since been left literally without a Government. The result was almost the annihilation of the colony. No revenue was raised—no money to pay public functionaries could be procured, until, in order to pay the salaries of the civil list, the Colonial Government, by reviving an obsolete duty on tonnage, had contrived to secure a sum of money set apart for the payment of sums falling due upon a loan raised for the purpose of promoting immigration. He had only one subject more to notice as regarded Mr. Barkly. He regretted that that Gentleman should have sacrificed his consistency by accepting the office which he had gone out to fill. It would be remembered that Mr. Barkly, in his place in the House, had denounced the policy of Government, as regarded our West India colonies—that he had appeared before the Sugar and Coffee Plantation Committee to justify the resistance showed by the Court of Guiana to the Colonial Office—and that he had stated that the colonists had been made the victims of fraud and oppression. Yet, after all this, they found Mr. Barkly accepting the office of Governor of Guiana, and going out upon the full salary of 5,000*l.* a year. He (Mr. Baillie) thought that he had now made out a case to justify Parliamentary inquiry. He (Mr. Baillie) was aware that he had drawn largely on the indulgence of the House, and it had been his intention to enter into the case of the Mauritius. In that colony causes of complaint similar to those which he had detailed, existed in equal force. There was a wasteful and extravagant expenditure of the public money, and an increasing inability on the part of the colonists to pay the burthens with which they were saddled. On mature reflection, however, he considered, on the whole, that it would be advisable to confine the inquiry for which he asked to the cases of the two colonies the grievances of which he had detailed. In the first place, they were the most urgent cases, and called for immediate interference; and, in the second place, he could not but remember that the closer they confined the inquiry, the greater would be the probability of their arriving at an early result. He would not, therefore, enter into the case of the Mauritius. But I will ask the House (said the hon. Gentleman) whether it is possible that our colonies can long continue to be governed under such a system—whether we can continue to deprive the inhabitants of our Crown colonies of all share in the management of their own affairs? I am aware, Sir, that the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for the Colonies (Mr. Hawes), will be most liberal in his promises, both for himself and the head of his department. He will tell us that he has often already recorded his vote for colonial self-government. But that is what the colonists complain of. They say—

> "Both the hon. Gentleman and the noble Lord have expressed opinions in favour of our demands, but their opinions are at variance with their recorded votes. We have no faith in the promises of the one; we have no hope in the management of the other."

And indeed, Sir, how can the inhabitants of the colonies place any confidence in the

Colonial Minister? How can they place confidence in a Minister who stands convicted of deliberate attempts to deceive and mislead the House of Lords as to the condition and prospects of Jamaica?—how can they place confidence in a Minister who did not hesitate to read certain portions of a memorial to show that Jamaica was in a happy and a flourishing condition, and that the island presented a good field for the investment of capital—all the time knowing, as he did know, that the document which he was quoting had been addressed to him to prove, and did prove, that the memorialists were utterly ruined, and that the large capital which they had invested in land was utterly wasted and gone? Sir, I ask, whether a Minister, who thus perverts truth to serve party purposes, can possibly enjoy the confidence of the colonists; and whether he ought to be longer entrusted with the high and responsible duty of presiding over and protecting the lives and fortunes of British subjects? Sir, nothing but the unhappy differences which existed on this side of the House during the last Session could have prevented the Opposition from uniting in a body to denounce the Minister who could be guilty of such an act, and the Cabinet which could support him. But there is a point beyond which endurance is no longer possible—there is a limit, which, once overstepped, will and must rouse any but the most effete and emasculated of mankind. Sir, that limit has been passed, and the time, I do believe, has now come when at last a dread of responsibility will not be allowed to overwhelm all sense of fairness and of honour, or to prevent a majority of this House from coming forward to give their support to a Motion for that inquiry which I demand in the name of justice, of policy, and in the name of the outraged British colonists, who, although nominally living under the shadow of a constitution which gives them a right to expect safety and protection, have yet from the benefits of that constitution been so long and so systematically excluded. The hon. Member concluded by moving the Motion of which he had given notice.

Mr. HUME said, that after the able and, as he hoped, convincing speech of the hon. Member who had just sat down, little remained for him to say in seconding the Motion, to induce the House to accede to the demand. In September last, a few days before the House adjourned, he (Mr. Hume) presented a petition from Ceylon describing the condition of that colony, and on that occasion his hon. Friend the Under Secretary for the Colonies, who was misinformed, no doubt, declared that the statements in that petition were exaggerated and incorrect, and that the measures of Lord Torrington had been sanctioned and approved by a public meeting of the inhabitants of Ceylon, at which Sir Emerson Tennent was present. It now turned out that at that meeting there were present only eight natives who were not in the public service and depending for their bread on the Government. But though Sir Emerson Tennent stated in his despatch there was no cause for alarm, yet within a few days afterwards it appeared the colonial authorities became alarmed, and took measures which were unworthy of a British Government. It was the system under which the colonies had been managed that was the cause of the distress complained of. It mattered not who was the Colonial Secretary: so long as one man undertook to govern forty-three colonies, scattered up and down in all parts of the world, so long would they have such evils as now appeared to contend with. Considerations of money were little to be compared with the moral and physical evils produced by colonial misgovernment; and he must say that every act of the noble Lord the present Colonial Minister discredited his former professions in this House. The fault, then, was with the House for allowing such a system to continue. Under a proper system the colonies would be an assistance to the mother country, instead of a charge, as they now were, of 3,000,000*l.* or 4,000,000*l.* a year. Notwithstanding his declared wish, three years ago, on taking office, that British institutions should extend to all our colonies, up to this hour the only constitution which had been granted was one to New Zealand, which, in a few months, was repealed. Now, either the noble Lord was sincere or not. He had either no capacity to carry out what he had promised, or he had made professions which he never intended to fulfil; and in either case he ought to retire from the position which he held. What was it which had brought Ceylon into its present condition? He had long been in the habit of coupling the name of Lord Castlereagh with acts of misgovernment; but in 1811 he found Lord Castlereagh strongly recommending the Government of that day to show their appreciation of the excellent character and conduct of the

Cingalese, by extending to them trial by jury, and empowering the natives to fill places of trust in various parts of the colony. What had been the result of this policy? Sir Alexander Johnstone had carried out the jury system, and the Committee which sat on the affairs of Ceylon in 1832, declared that a more peaceable and orderly community did not exist under the British Government; while Sir W. Gifford assured the House that their policy of conciliation and of confidence towards the Cingalese had been attended with the most complete success. What, after a period of twenty-six years, had produced the present state of the island? Nothing but misgovernment; and the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down might have detailed to the House a variety of individual acts which had led to the injury of the colony, and the state of disquiet which its inhabitants were now manifesting. It remained for Lord Torrington to attempt to pass such laws as were likely to produce disturbance; and from the hour of his arrival in the colony to the present time, every act of his Lordship would be found unconstitutional, and likely to cause disaffection both among the natives and the Europeans. He (Mr. Hume) would not descend to particulars, but he was prepared to show, at the proper time, the injury which step by step had been perpetrated, and the acts of oppression which had resulted in the present unsatisfactory state of affairs. One of these acts alone might, however, be adduced now. Was there on the records of Great Britain any account of men, who, for mere absence from home, had had their property confiscated, and taken military possession of, without any trial whatever having taken place? Why, every hon. Member of the House who had the slightest regard for law, justice, or the honour of his country, ought to stand up and say that an inquiry into the conduct pursued at Ceylon was imperatively necessary, and Her Majesty's Ministers ought to recall Lord Torrington before another twenty-four hours' passed over, because all the facts against his Lordship were to be found in official documents emanating from the Colonial Office. He submitted that every day the Government allowed such a governor to continue, or such a colonial officer to act as first commissioner, they became a party to his acts. Enough had been said to show that Ceylon was for many years in a happy, comfortable, loyal, and peaceable condition; the inquiry would show by what means an alteration for the worse had taken place, and then the responsibility must be laid upon those to whom the blame fairly attached. It might be said that the House should not pass a severe judgment upon Earl Grey or Lord Torrington until the inquiry had first taken place; but the fact was, there were acts under their own hands to which no friend to justice or British liberty could for a moment assent. With regard to British Guiana, if ever there was a greater insult than another offered to a colony, it was in the manner in which Earl Grey had refused to allow the reduction of the expenditure in the one now named. He (Mr. Hume) had presented a petition in 1837 from the colonists of British Guiana, in which they stated that they objected altogether to being compelled to pay a civil list of 39,000*l.*, as the taxation of the colony amounted to one-third of the value of the whole of the exports. 3,000,000*l.* were the value of the exports; 1,000,000*l.* was the amount of the taxes levied; and when the British House of Commons passed the Act of 1846, which inevitably would bring that colony in a short time into competition with other colonies, they immediately determined to effect a reduction gradually but yet certainly in their expenditure, and they proposed in December, 1847, that a reduction of 25 per cent should be made in the whole expense of the colony. That proposition was submitted and refused; and Earl Grey's answer on the subject had been already read. The Act under which the civil list was guaranteed, stipulated that the colonies should provide the expenses of the civil list, but that in return they were to be granted protection to their produce. Now, the Government having ceased to give them what was promised, he asked any man of common justice whether the contract was not in equity dissolved, and they were not now entitled to have a large reduction made in their expenditure? Earl Grey had, however, objected to that: his Lordship had said, "You may reduce any other salary, but do not meddle with the civil list, for I will admit of no reduction, so far as that is concerned." The Court of Policy asked how they could allow large heavy salaries to remain, and cut down the other servants of the colony, who really did essential service? and after a long argument, they came to the conclusion that it would be highly improper to make reductions in that way, but that they would not refuse the supplies, provided they were allowed to make a general reduction. Three months were permitted to elapse in order to receive an answer from the Government; three months more expired, to see whether the Committee, of which the late Lord George Bentinck was chairman, would come to any satisfactory conclusion; and then it was found that, as their request would not be complied with, they were resolved not to vote any more supplies. He might refer to the Cape, the Mauritius, and almost every other British colony, for proof that a bad system had prevailed, and that the House ought to come to the determination to grant to the several colonies their own self-government. Let them each pay their own expenses, and free England from the charge which she was now compelled to pay. They were willing to do so; and what then prevented it from being done? Why, it was the patronage which arose, and caused so many abuses that the Financial Reform Association would be perfectly astonished if the items were laid upon the table of the House, and published for general information. He hoped, under all the circumstances, that the inquiry now sought for would be gone into, not against this man or that man, but against the system; and if justice were to be administered, and a fair inquiry instituted, he thought that Earl Grey and the hon. the Under Secretary for the Colonies ought to retire from the positions they now held, at least while the inquiry was pending. There had been instances in which despatches had been either mutilated or altogether withheld through Ministerial influence; and, though he might provoke a laugh by repeating his opinion, he nevertheless still thought that the inquiry would be more impartially conducted if the noble Lord and his hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, sent in their resignations, and allowed others to take their places for a time. He seconded the Motion with great pleasure, in the hope that the inquiry would enlighten the public, and have the effect of changing the entire system hitherto pursued with reference to the colonies.

MR. RICARDO trusted that he might be permitted to make a few observations on what had gone before, although it was no part of his intention to attempt to take upon himself any reply to the heavy charges which had been brought against the Government. But he must express his surprise that with so great an accusation, the hon. Member for Inverness-shire (Mr. Baillie) should have concluded with so small a Motion. He thought that, if the Colonial Office were guilty of one-half of the high crimes and misdemeanours laid to their charge—in some part directly, but more by the insinuations of his hon. Friend (Mr. Hume), it would have been more fair, and more worthy of his position, to have come down and proposed a direct vote of censure, and not confine their Motion to one of mere inquiry. [MR. BAILLIE: It is a direct vote of censure.] The hon. Gentleman says it is a direct vote of censure. It might mean many things, and it was for that very reason that he (Mr. Ricardo) had given expressly notice of his Amendment, because it was his belief that the case of Ceylon was taken as a peg to hang another inquiry on. He (Mr. Ricardo) did not understand what connexion the case of Ceylon had with that of British Guiana. Why did the hon. Member (Mr. Baillie) not bring forward the case of Ceylon by itself? Why couple it with Guiana and the Mauritius? And why did he, at the last moment, withdraw one of the charges against the Colonial Office? He (Mr. Ricardo) was at a loss to know of what it was the hon. Gentleman was complaining. First, it was against the whole system of the colonies. Then he fell off against the Government and the Colonial Office. With regard to Ceylon he was not going to speak—it was no part of his intention to defend the Government. His case was this. Under the guise of a Motion for inquiry into the administration of Ceylon and Guiana, an attempt had been made for a reactionary movement in favour of protection. That was his case, and he would prove it. He would trace it step by step. The whole object was to embarrass the Government, and so to produce a reaction in favour of protection. Who was the leader of the party who refused the supplies? A Mr. Peter Rose—who, from an extract in the despatch of Governor Light, he (Mr. Ricardo) found was to be considered the organ of the colonial section in the local legislature, in regard to the supposed intentions of the colonial members, at the ensuing Combined Court. Mr. Rose had declared to the Governor that it was hopeless to expect the supplies so long as the colonists were unprotected against slave sugar. The government of the colony was composed of a Governor, assisted by a Court of Policy, and a Combined Court. The functions of the Court of Policy were to prepare the estimates; those of the Combined Court to vote the supplies. The Court of Policy proposed, at their meeting in 1848, that the civil list should be reduced twenty-five per cent. Although it was alleged that the civil list was tricked out of the colonists, because we promised them an emigration fund, they themselves stated that the grounds on which they proposed the reduction were, that when they voted it they had protection for sugar—and when that was removed they found a necessity to reduce their expenditure. They afterwards proposed that the estimates should be postponed until the result of the Committee sitting here upon the Coffee and Sugar Plantations should be known, the motive for refusing the supplies being the withdrawal of protection. Mr. Rose was at the head of all those movements; he says in his speech that it was with deep regret they proceeded to notice that the people of England could not afford to pay 3,000,000*l*. sterling, or 15,000,000 of dollars to keep up the wages of the labourers of the West Indies. They were not much surprised at the enunciation of such a doctrine in the mouth of a free-trade Minister; but we did not expect to have it recorded in an address from a British Governor to a colonial legislative assembly. Immediately after the supplies were refused, he (Mr. Ricardo) found that at a public meeting, Mr. Rose said—

> "Gentlemen, the Committee have completed their labours. A petition will be read to the meeting; a demand for compensation is part of the petition. I am prepared to say that the case is not overstated, and the claim of the West Indies to a compensation of 103,000,000*l*. is supported very generally in England. There is only one solitary voice raised against our claim, and that is Mr. Cobden's. Mr. Hume, a distinguished leader in the House of Commons, supported our Motion."

His hon. Friend (Mr. Hume) had told him (Mr. Ricardo) that he had presented a petition from British Guiana; and on inquiring of the hon. Gentleman if it was this petition, or the substance of it, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hume) replied no; By whomsoever presented, its prayer was for emigration upon an extensive scale from all parts of Africa, and a plan for the better carrying out of all treaties with foreign nations for the more effectual suppression of the slave trade; with a demand for the liberation of those persons now unjustly held in slavery in Cuba, Porto Rico, and other places. Payment of seven millions sterling—a full indemnity for the depreciation of land and machinery, with a full recognition of British Guiana as an integral part of the empire—were the terms upon which the Combined Court would vote the supplies. For, let it be clearly understood, that six-sevenths of the supplies were under the entire control of the Combined Court, and if they proposed to reduce them 50 per cent, there would have hardly been a voice raised against the proposition at the Colonial Office; but the remaining seventh, which included the civil list, had been voted for a term of years, and could only be altered or reduced by an address to Her Majesty. Could any one, after reading this speech and these despatches, believe that these amendments were moved for the purposes of economy, or with a view to self-government? Not so; they were made for the resuscitation of protection. They were not made against Earl Grey, but against a free-trade Parliament—against free-trade in favour of monopoly. And while all this was going on in British Guiana, very much the same thing was going on in the Mauritius. He (Mr. Ricardo) could trace the same object in the movements in that colony—an attempt to embarrass the Government, with a view to obtaining that protection with the people of England had declared by their Parliament they were no longer able to afford. It was much easier to find fault than to express a sentiment of praise, yet it would be unmanly in him not to express the opinion which he entertained—that Earl Grey had been called to a very arduous post under circumstances of no ordinary difficulty. The people of this country said they would no longer consent to have their industry taxed for the support of the colonies. Otherwise they would have been called upon to make greater sacrifices than had been heretofore demanded of them. It was to Earl Grey's honour that he, in a time of undoubted peril, was willing to incur odium abroad, and misrepresentation at home, rather than flinch from any of those principles which he so ably maintained, in this as well as in the other House of Parliament; and that House would not be doing its duty if they did not show their sense of his high courage. But let him tell the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Baillie) this, that he is no friend to the colonies who held out to them a hope that there is a possibility of returning to the old state of things. Do not let him cajole them to the belief that there is a party in this House powerful enough to return to that commercial policy which the people of England have declared to be oppressive and mischievous. Let him not deceive them into a notion that the people of this country are not firm to the principles of commercial policy which they have deliberately adopted. They will not favour any interest, whether it be that of landowner or shipowner, to the disadvantage of the colonist; but they have pronounced their determination that they will be no longer content to subsidise the colonies; and it was because they had done so, he (Mr. Ricardo) had given notice of the Amendment which he now begged leave to move, namely, at the end of the question to add the words—

> " whereby they may be rendered more capable of meeting the difficulties of the transition from a system of protection to that competition in the British market with the produce of foreign States, to which Parliament has determined that they should be exposed in accordance with the general commercial policy which it has deliberately adopted."

MR. HAWES said, had it not been for the notice which his hon. Friend the Member for Stoke-upon-Trent (Mr. Ricardo) had given, he should have felt it his duty, as it would have been his inclination, immediately to have replied to the speech of the hon. Member for Inverness-shire (Mr. Baillie), who had first addressed the House. The hon. Gentleman who commenced this debate had made grave and heavy charges against the noble Lord at the head of the Colonial Department (Earl Grey); against the Colonial Department in times gone by; and, he might almost say, against Parliament and the country itself. He had endeavoured to support those charges by statements which he (Mr. Hawes) must characterise as singularly disingenuous and unfair. But why had the hon. Gentleman struck out the Mauritius from his Motion? He (Mr. Hawes) asked him to retain the Mauritius as part of his case. He feared no inquiry —he courted inquiry, and was willing to insert the Mauritius, and any other number of colonies the government of which the hon. Gentleman might choose to call in question. Let it not be understood for a moment that either his noble Friend at the head of the Colonial Office (Earl Grey) or himself feared in the slightest degree any inquiry that might be instituted. He (Mr. Hawes) feared it as little as the right hon. Gentleman had reason to fear it who conducted the colonial affairs under the last Administration. He was ready to meet it, and afford the hon. Mover of the Resolution an opportunity of making good his charges. That House was not the fittest place to make these charges, particularly considering the nature of those which had been advanced. But, having proposed to inquire whether there was any ground for the charges, he, at least, might have postponed his judgment until his own accusations were proved, as they would be proved, to be utterly unfounded. [*Cheers and laughter.*] He (Mr. Hawes) was prepared to be met with some jeering, but he was entitled at least to a respectful hearing; this he might say, that it would not interrrupt him in the course he intended to pursue. He did not mean, by declaring his willingness to enter on the inquiry, and his determination to have that inquiry followed up, to shrink in any respect from dealing as well as he was able with the charges and accusations now brought forward. If the hon. Gentleman desired inquiry, he should have every opportunity of making good his charges. But he thought that the hon. Gentleman, in moving for the proposed Committee, might have spared the bitterness and personality in which he had indulged. He (Mr. Hawes), however, would not shrink in the slightest degree from dealing, as well as he was able, with the accusations which the hon. Gentleman had brought forward. Now the hon. Gentleman had accused the Colonial Office of tyranny and oppression, of wasteful expenditure; and he had said, that the colonies ought to have the control of their own affairs, and the management of their own taxation. But the hon. Gentleman, in treating of our colonies, had not attempted anything like discrimination—he had not distinguished those colonies which either had responsible or representative government, or were more directly under the control of the Crown; in short, he had so dealt in generalities as to leave the House in ignorance of what the policy of this country was towards colonies placed under very different circumstances, and under very different degrees of control from home. It might have been supposed from the opening speech that there was not a colony in existence which had a representative government. The hon. Mover (Mr. Baillie) had dealt in general accusations; he had however confined his illustrations to two or three cases; and he had not stated fully and fairly what was the colonial policy of the country. [Mr. Baillie : I stated that I would confine my observations to two of the colonies.] He (Mr. Hawes) admitted that such was the fact; but the charges of misgovernment were general—he would afterwards remark upon the particular cases. First of all, attention had been drawn to the colony of Ceylon; and it was necessary to follow that part of the case step by step. Now, when Lord Torrington arrived in Ceylon, he found its treasury almost bankrupt, its trade declining, and, of course, the European population, chiefly engaged in trade, in by no means a prosperous or thriving condition. The hon. Member (Mr. Baillie), in alluding to that colony, had not referred to a single measure introduced by Lord Torrington, except those which had reference to taxation. He had not uttered one word with respect to the great reductions which that noble Lord had effected, to his exertions to relieve industry from the pressure which bore upon it, or to his endeavours to procure a change from an indirect to a direct system of taxation. The hon. Gentleman had passed over those points which would have told in favour of Lord Torrington, and had dwelt only upon those which were likely to produce an unfavourable impression. But what were the measures which Lord Torrington had adopted upon his arrival? Finding an empty treasury and a declining revenue, the noble Lord commenced a revision of the tariff, and repealed taxes to the amount of 30,000*l.*, bearing upon trade and agriculture, with a view to revive commerce and industry, the whole of the particulars of which were in the papers before Parliament, but to which not the smallest allusion had been made by the hon. Gentleman. But that was not all. Lord Torrington instituted inquiries into the state of the public expenditure, and in the first six months of 1848, in consequence of those inquiries, he reduced the expenditure of the colony 20,000*l.* a year, and chiefly upon the fixed establishments. Not the slightest allusion had been made by the hon. Member (Mr. Baillie) to that act of the noble Lord. And this was not all. The Committee in Ceylon was still pursuing its investigations. Lord Torrington was determined to inquire rigidly and closely into the extravagant expenditure of the island during recent years. His Lordship was of opinion that reductions might — and he (Mr. Hawes) admitted that they ought to — be effected; and his Lordship had already proceeded to give an earnest of his intention by reducing the expenditure already about 20,000*l.* a year; and by the measures now in contemplation he hoped to be enabled to equalise the income and expenditure. The Governor found it absolutely necessary to give relief to trade, which was suffering under severe depression; and he hoped the House would not forget that that depression, which took place in the autumn of 1847 and extended to 1848, was not confined to England alone; and called for every relief that could be afforded, in order to revive trade and restore credit, especially in Ceylon. Well, the noble Lord (Viscount Torrington) relieved the trade of the island, which was labouring under those difficulties, from a very large amount of the taxation that pressed upon it. He repealed the coffee duties to the extent of 15,000*l.* a year, and he reduced the duties upon various staple products of the colony, such as tobacco, cinnamon, &c., to the amount of from 12,000*l.* to 15,000*l.*, effecting a reduction altogether of about 30,000*l.* But it became necessary to see if some means could not be devised in order to replace some portion of the revenue thus surrendered, because, although these great reductions had been made, the revenue, under the existing depression of trade, was not likely to keep up to its former amount; and therefore Lord Torrington had to impose various taxes, but taxes bearing directly upon property. He had proposed, not four ordinances, as the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Baillie) had stated, but six; not all of them, however, for the purpose of raising the revenue. First, there was the road ordinance, which was drawn up by one of the ablest public servants in the island, and a gentleman whose zeal, well-tried talents, and judgment, was of the greatest weight in preparing measures of that sort. He believed he had the pleasure of speaking in the presence of a relative of that gentleman; he alluded to Mr. Wodehouse, who held an important office in the island. This ordinance was intended to place the roads of the island, as far as possible, under some sort of local and native control; and another object was that the taxation, which had formerly been wholly borne by the public revenue, should to a great extent be paid by local rates. But it was impossible, of course, to levy rates in a place like Ceylon, and therefore a commutation for labour was decided upon.

Three days' labour a year was to be taken, or a commuted payment instead of 3*s.*, to make the roads; and this was what the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Baillie) had called a poll tax, an instance of the disingenuousness of the hon. Member's charges. The hon. Gentleman seemed to think these ordinances had all been repealed. He (Mr. Hawes) had listened closely to the hon. Gentleman's remarks, and it appeared the impression they had left on the House was, that these various ordinances had been all repealed. The road tax had not been repealed. [Mr. Baillie: I did not say that it had.] He thought that the hon. Member's speech must have impressed the House with the idea that all the ordinances had been repealed. [Mr. Baillie said, he had stated only that the dog and gun tax ordinances had been repealed.] But the hon. Gentleman was in error; for the gun tax was not repealed. Great objection had been raised to the gun tax, the object of which was to enforce the registration of arms. Perhaps the rate of duty was too high, and an annual registration was objectionable. The Governor, finding it too high, had altered it, and one registration in perpetuity had been adopted in lieu of the annual system. But the great object, the registration of arms, had been secured, and that statute remained. Then there was the dog tax, as the hon. Gentleman had designated it. One would have thought this would have been the last subject to make a complaint about; and he (Mr. Hawes) must consider that the hon. Gentleman knew very little of Ceylon, because, if he had inquired, he would have found that one of the greatest nuisances of the island, and, indeed, one that was common to most eastern countries, was the great number of dogs by which they were infested. A general desire had been felt that some means should be taken to reduce the number. If the tax had been confined to the towns, he believed it would have given universal satisfaction to the colony. The country districts had complained, on the ground that in secluded spots the dogs were required as watchdogs; but all that it was necessary to say on this tax was, that it was one of those that had been absolutely repealed, and, therefore, all complaints on that score were now at an end. Then there were the taxes on stamps and carriages for hire. These remained. So the case stood thus—two had been repealed; one, the gun tax, had been modified; and three remained. The hon. Gentleman, however, did not content himself with stating that Lord Torrington was an incapable governor, and that his plans of taxation ought to be condemned, but he had also pronounced the opinion that the outbreak of the insurrection in Ceylon had been caused by these ordinances. He (Mr. Hawes) confessed he did not esteem the hon. Gentleman's authority on this subject very highly. It was opposed to the highest authorities in the island—it was opposed to all the information which he (Mr. Hawes) had received upon the subject. Now the first authority that he would venture to quote, was totally at variance with the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Baillie). It was that of the Major General commanding the troops of the island. He saw the hon. Gentleman was unwilling to accept the testimony of this officer; but he (Mr. Hawes) relied upon it, and would read to the House what he had stated. [The hon. Gentleman here read an extract, which showed the Major General's opinion to be that the late ordinances passed by the legislative council had been urged as a plea for the outbreak, but that was only a pretext. The rebellion had long been brewing, and, as had been stated, the Kandians were anxious to have their own king, and to possess themselves of their country and their properties.] That was not the only opinion entitled to weight, but he would call the attention of the House to the opinion of the Chief Justice of the island. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Baillie) had endeavoured, very unfavourably, to put the Chief Justice in contrast with the Governor; but he (Mr. Baillie) would, at all events, allow him (Mr. Hawes) to claim the Chief Justice as an authority, when his opinion coincided with that which he (Mr. Hawes) entertained, though in opposition to that of the hon. Gentleman. He would first read to the House what he said in passing sentence upon some prisoners who were implicated in the rebellion. The Chief Justice said—

> "I therefore conclude that the rebellion was hatched by the headmen or priests, or by both the headmen and priests. The priests had a cause, and a growing cause, for discontent. I am aware—it is known in the country generally, and needs no further allusion here—that they kept a keen eye upon the decline of their religion, and it was, perhaps, but natural that that should be a cause of discontent to their minds. But I am aware, at the same time—and I speak now from my own observation—that the headmen were always discontented, as far as their conduct came under my observation. The remembrance of the power and

> authority they formerly exercised over the common people, is not yet effaced altogether from their minds; neither is their power, as far as I can see, completely gone, or anything like it, as is clear from the evidence adduced during this inquiry. Their word appears to have operated as law upon the minds of all the men of inferior ranks, and I believe they see the day is fast approaching when this state of things cannot continue long; they are aware that those perquisites of their office, which they formerly exacted as their rights, are now viewed as nothing but oppression and wrong; and they find that their power over the common people is constantly decreasing."

This was the opinion of the Chief Justice, who did not attribute the outbreak to the ordinances; neither did the Major General commanding the forces, nor Sir Emerson Tennent, the colonial secretary, but the contrary. He would not trouble the House by reference to the papers, but might perhaps content himself with stating, in order to shorten what he had to say, that the House would find in the blue book that both the opinion of Sir Emerson Tennent, and others who had performed extensive tours through the colony, and sent home communications upon this subject, was, that these ordinances were not the immediate cause of the outbreak. He (Mr. Hawes) was perfectly ready to admit that the ordinances had been used by parties endeavouring to foster discontent, and to inflame the minds of the people; and that they succeeded in their designs, by making a handle of these ordinances to excite discontent, would be seen in the circumstances mentioned in the book. They endeavoured to persuade the natives that about thirty or forty new taxes were about to be imposed upon them, and that they ought therefore to resist the imposition of them. And he must say, that means were taken to incite the natives to insurrection by parties who ought to have known better. The editor of the newspaper which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Baillie) had quoted, had published matter tending to lead the people to an active resistance against the laws and authorities of the island; and the petition which had been referred to that night, was not, in his opinion, a *bonâ fide* petition from the natives. It was got up and concocted in connexion with the newspapers at Colombo; and would only have had the effect, if the Government had been weak enough to attend to it, of giving certain parties a very undue degree of importance. Again, he could not help tracing, in some of these colonies, the active agency of persons who, either directly or indirectly, were interested in the revival of protection. His hon. Friend (Mr. Ricardo) had tracked out the efforts of these parties in Guiana very acutely; and he (Mr. Hawes) found the hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume) writing a letter to Ceylon, which was published in the papers there, and commented upon with all the weight due to his colonial reputation. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hume), in that letter, encouraged the natives to renew the agitation, and never to let it cease until they had obtained responsible Government like that of Canada; whilst the native population amounted to about one million and a half, and the Europeans were only a few thousands in number, the natives being profoundly ignorant, superstitious, under the influence of a priesthood such as existed there. Now, to write to such a colony as Ceylon, and advise that agitation should be continued till a responsible Government like that of Canada was obtained, he (Mr. Hawes) deemed to be the height of indiscretion and imprudence on the part of his hon. Friend. The hon. Gentleman, who had used many hard words that night, must pardon him for making these animadversions upon his own conduct, as he had so freely censured that of others. He (Mr. Hawes) could not pass over such conduct, nor let his hon. Friend altogether escape reproof. [Mr. HUME: I don't want you to let me off.] Now, with regard to the most painful part of the subject. Far be it from him to look with indifference upon any unnecessary measures of severity or loss of life—quite the contrary; but he begged the House to recall to its recollection all the circumstances connected with these deplorable transactions. He had already said they did not arise from these ordinances; on the contrary, from 1817 down to 1848, there had been successive attempts at insurrection, fomented always by the same classes, for the same objects, and characterised by the same incidents as the rebellion of 1848. The priests, headmen, and chiefs, were all more or less implicated in this and preceding insurrections. When this insurrection broke out, the military force in Kandy, commanded by Colonel Drought, was exceedingly small, not more than 1,000 men, who were scattered about at different posts. The outbreak was simultaneous in many places, and was attended by the desertion from their ordinary occupations of large numbers of the people, and the whole bore the aspect of a formidable insurrection, much the same at the outset as that which occurred in 1817. And here, in passing, he would allude to what took place in the year 1817. It took twelve months to put down the insurrection of that year. There were 10,000 troops employed, and nearly 1,100 lives lost in one way or another. There was also a large destruction of property, and the total charge on the revenues of the colony, or of the mother country rather, was upwards of a quarter of a million. Martial law was proclaimed, courts-martial sat, and martial law existed for two years after all open resistance in the field was suppressed. And now let them contrast all these things with the conduct of Lord Torrington in the present case. He would read a letter of Major General Smelt's, and let the House mark what he said with regard to martial law in 1848. The Major General said—

> "Martial law was also almost immediately proclaimed, for the rebels assembled in such numbers in different places, and seemed so determined to murder all the white people and destroy their properties, that no time was to be lost, and prompt and vigorous measures were absolutely necessary."

After describing the arrival of the troops from Madras, he continues—

> "To the very energetic and vigorous measures adopted by his Excellency the Governor must be attributed our present success in at least checking the rebellion. He feels confident it is quite put down. I own I am not so sanguine, for though the rebels have suffered severely, they still keep to their strongholds in the jungles, and in very large numbers. All people are now beginning to be convinced that this rebellion is deeply rooted and widely spread, and has been in agitation ever since the withdrawal of the different detachments that were stationed in small posts throughout the interior provinces in the years 1837 and 1838. In 1844 a disposition to rebellion showed itself, but it was fortunately discovered and suppressed before any serious outbreak took place, the ringleaders being all known and taken. I hope now we shall not require further reinforcements from Madras; and if we have really succeeded in putting down this rebellion, it has been owing to acting with promptness and decision at first; and I have only to hope that what has been done may be approved by Her Majesty's Government at home."

The House must not, therefore, think this was a contemptible rebellion, that did not require the application of energetic and vigorous measures. They must not judge of its character or extent simply from the smallness of the loss of life that occurred. As in the former rebellion, so in this, the destruction of property, the loss of troops from their exposure, and the injury to agricultural operations, might have gone on to a very serious extent; and he (Mr. Hawes) was convinced that, if the Governor had not acted with promptitude and vigour, the House would have been asked to pass a vote of censure upon him for shrinking from the measures absolutely necessary under the circumstances for restoring tranquillity and order to the colony. Martial law was proclaimed again on this occasion, which was, in fact, the suspension of all law, and the Governor was not to be held responsible for the proceedings of the courts-martial under the circumstances. Most of the trials — he believed nearly all of them, and the sentences that were carried into execution — took place 100 miles from the spot the Governor was then at. They had not the complete accounts of these proceedings yet; but British officers presided over these courts, whose character and conduct were at least a guarantee that the proceedings of these courts were not to be considered of so sanguinary and unjustifiable a character as the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Baillie) had declared them to be. The hon. Member had alluded to the case of a priest. He (Mr. Hawes) had heard it with pain; but when an insurrection took place, and an influential priest was found to be inciting a large native population, to be fomenting discontent and rebellion, the consequences must be plain. It was obvious to all, that measures must be resorted to which were to be deplored, but which were incidental to such a state of things as then existed in Ceylon —a state of things not produced by the Government, but entirely attributable to the priests and headmen, who wished to recover the power which they had lost. Now, what was the general opinion of those living on the spot, as regarded the conduct of Lord Torrington? The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Baillie), with an inveterate bitterness, seemed to think of nothing but attacking and vilifying that noble Lord. Sir Herbert Maddock, a member of the Council of Calcutta, then on the spot, addressing a public meeting at Kandy, said—

> "I fully and most cordially concur with you in expressing my high appreciation of the able and well-arranged plans of the Government in Colombo, of the prompt and efficient distribution of its military resources in such a manner that, with the exception of those districts where the insurgents, appearing unexpectedly and in great force, were enabled to overrun the country, and spread havoc and destruction in their path, before the military could reach them, has preserved the lives and properties of the European

settlers, and all other loyal and peaceful subjects in all other parts of the province; and I unhesitatingly state my belief that you are directly indebted to the able person at the head of the Government for the security and comparative tranquillity which now everywhere prevail."

Why, then, did the hon. Gentleman, when referring to this book, entirely omit these quotations? Why did he not have the candour and fairness to include these statements in favour of Lord Torrington, instead of endeavouring to seize hold of every thing calculated to create a prejudice against him? If he had only stated the case fairly and fully, the hon. Gentleman would have been entirely unable to show any grounds for this inquiry. But he (Mr. Hawes) was prepared to meet the hon. Gentleman in Committee, and was confident he should successfully refute his accusations. Public meetings of the leading inhabitants of Colombo, as well as of the Catholic clergy, with their bishop, and the evidence furnished from private letters which he (Mr. Hawes) had seen, unconnected with the Governor, all concurred in one uniform testimony to the effect that the vigour, ability, and decision of conduct displayed by Lord Torrington, entitled him to praise and approbation. And now a word or two in behalf of the soldiery employed. The hon. Gentleman had alluded to a newspaper of the colony in support of his views. Let him (Mr. Hawes) refer to one at home not unfavourable to the hon. Gentleman's views, which declared that the conduct of the military had been brutal and uncontrollable. He (Mr. Hawes) gave this assertion a direct and indignant denial. It was contradicted by every paper before the House, and had no foundation except in the malignity of those who had unscrupulously originated the report. There was not a particle of evidence to support this discreditable assertion. After what he had already said, he must declare to the House that if the governor of a distant colony like Ceylon was to be attacked in this way, before they had full and perfect information before them—for the hon. Gentleman had given notice of his Motion before the papers were upon the table, and he (Mr. Hawes) had great difficulty in bringing forward the documents in time for the Motion—if the governor of a distant colony, at a moment like this, when the native population were in a state to be easily excited, was to be attacked in the spirit and manner which the hon. Gentleman had manifested, he (Mr. Hawes) would venture to say that the spirit of insurrection was not likely to be effectually allayed or extinguished. So much with regard to Ceylon. He now came to Guiana. The hon. Gentleman had made a statement more like a burlesque of the facts than the reality. He had taken, he supposed, his facts from driblets that appeared from time to time in the newspapers. He had stated that the noble Lord at the head of the Colonial Department (Earl Grey) had refused to consider any reductions in the civil list of Guiana. He (Mr. Hawes) was sure the hon. Gentleman had stated what he could not prove; but he should have an ample opportunity of having all his statements thoroughly sifted before a Committee. He would now proceed to consider the main subject of recent contention in this colony—the civil list. It was commonly stated to be about 39,000*l.* a year. The revenue of the colony averaged about 227,000*l.* But the civil list was overstated at 39,000*l.*—a less sum than that that was actually paid by the colony. There was, first, a charge on the civil list of 7,000*l.* for stipendiary magistrates, and towards this sum this country contributed 4,500*l.* Then two pensioners that had dropped off some time ago, amounting to about 800*l.* or 1,000*l.* a year. This 1,000*l.* and the 4,500*l.* above stated, had, therefore, to be deducted in calculating the amount of the civil list paid by the colony. That civil list had been settled in 1841, and was voluntarily renewed by the colony in 1844. In 1841, Mr. Peter Rose (who was the chief opponent of the present civil list) proposed to add to the civil list 9,000*l.* a year for the Church establishment, and the colony assented to this proposition. The Crown never suggested or demanded it; it was a pure addition on the part of the colony; and therefore, with regard to the civil list, so far as the Crown was concerned in protecting the salaries of the public servants, it amounted only to between 24,000*l.* and 25,000*l.*, whilst the revenue amounted to 227,000*l.* In 1848, the Combined Court asserted, as the ground of the refusal to continue the civil list, that the colony was too impoverished to pay it. But how stood the fact? Had their revenue fallen off? No; on the contrary, if allowance were made for the intended stoppage of supplies, by parties who had shipping in the offing, and ready to pour in their cargoes when the tax ordinance should be repealed, they would find good ground for saying that in 1848 the revenue had increased. Nor had the produce exported fallen off; for they had exported 2,000 hogsheads of sugar more in 1848 than they had done in 1847. Notwithstanding all these facts which he had just stated, there was no reason why every practical reduction or economy should be refused; but a very serious objection was taken to the mode by which it was attempted to force these reductions upon the Government. He would explain this by supposing the estimates to be under discussion in this House, and some hon. Member to say that the country was too poor to maintain the civil list at its present amount; that it must be reduced before the estimates are agreed to. Why, the answer would be, "We must first see whether the circumstances of the country justify this reduction of the civil list, which is settled by Act of Parliament, and before it can be repealed it must be assented to by the House of Lords and the Crown. Proceed regularly by address; and if both Houses of Parliament concur in altering it, a change will of course be made." Now, this was precisely what his noble Friend (Earl Grey) had told the Court of Policy; and it was untrue to say that he (Earl Grey) had refused to consider the reduction of the civil list. The noble Lord said—

> "I approve of your determination not to proceed further with the estimates after this vote had been come to, since it is obvious that the object of the Amendment was rather to assert the principle of the control of the Combined Court over the expenditure included in the civil list, than to effect a reduction of expenditure which could be of any serious importance. To that principle, for the reasons I have already fully stated, I think it my duty to oppose a firm resistance; I cannot, therefore, authorise your accepting a vote of the estimates in which provision is not made for the whole amount of the civil list, though I still entertain the readiness I have already expressed to consider any proposal for the reduction of the emoluments of the offices included in the civil list on vacancies occurring; nor would it be difficult for the Combined Court to bring any such proposed reduction under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government."

But did the colony take that advice? No; the object was to embarrass the Government, and to force concession by plunging the colony into difficulty and perplexity. It had been urged that when Mr. Barkly was appointed, then was the time for making a reduction. Lord Grey and himself (Mr. Hawes), he said again, were not opposed to reductions; but he must tell the House broadly that they were both of this one strong opinion, that it would be the worst policy unduly to cut down the salaries of the governors of colonies like Guiana, where the climate was very injurious, and the cost of living enormous, and where undoubtedly few men of that ability and standing which a governor ought to possess would be induced to undertake the office if they materially reduced the salaries. He did not find from his intercourse with those who were either connected with the colonies in this country, or with those who had been abroad, that the policy of the Government in this respect was disapproved of. He (Mr. Hawes) had shown that his noble Friend (Earl Grey) was not opposed to retrenchment in the colonial expenditure, but that the colonial legislature had endeavoured to force the question of protection upon the Home Government by stopping the supplies; and because the noble Lord had sternly refused to depart from his duty or desert his principles, notwithstanding the menaces or threats of any combination or party whatever, he had been made the object of obloquy, and contumely, and bitter attacks, such as they had a specimen of that night in this House. Well, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Baillie) had determined to leave the Mauritius out of his Motion. He (Mr. Hawes), however, entreated him to insert it. But the hon. Gentleman had said that the noble Lord (Earl Grey)—and he (Mr. Hawes) had also been included in the censure—had turned his back upon the principles they had formerly professed in that House, as soon as he was entrusted with the seals of office. They were both now accused of deserting their principles and professions; and it was said that they were both deserving of the censure due to inconsistency. Now, he (Mr. Hawes) would emphatically deny that charge, and was fully prepared to prove that it was unfounded. He (Mr. Hawes) knew nothing of which his noble Friend (Earl Grey) had complained of more when out of office — and he (Mr. Hawes) was not aware that he had himself made the same complaint, excepting upon a single occasion—than of what was called the meddling of the Colonial Office with the colonial legislatures: and what was the true remedy for this? Local self-government. He (Mr. Hawes) must suppose that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Baillie) did not mean that his proposition, that colonies should be entrusted with the powers of self-government, should be accepted without some qualification or limitation. Surely he would not maintain for a moment, that no distinction should be made between such a colony as Ceylon or Mauritius, where there was great disproportion between the races, and great inequality of condition—where the white population was small, and the coloured population very numerous—surely the hon. Gentleman would not for a moment pretend to say that the same government should be conferred upon such colonies as these, as he (Mr. Baillie) would confer upon a colony that was placed under totally different circumstances? Far from it: he (Mr. Hawes) believed the hon. Gentleman would find his doctrine far from being universally applicable. "The hon. Gentleman says, 'he always found them making promises;' but he will also find that the promises which I now make will be very rapidly performed; and, notwithstanding all the obloquy that has been thrown on the Colonial Office, I boldly appeal to my hon. friends when I state my case, to give me their support and sympathy, because I have adhered to that policy—and so has my noble Friend Earl Grey—which is in accordance with the general opinions of the liberal party in this country. No man has carried out more boldly the principles of representative and local self-government than Earl Grey. What has my noble Friend done since he came into office? First of all, I will turn to Canada. When Earl Grey came into office, responsible government in Canada was scarcely more than a name. A responsible government had been promised to the Canadians; but it had not then been carried into effect. But since the accession of my noble Friend to office, and under the superintendence of Lord Elgin—who, I may remark, was, when appointed, no connexion of Earl Grey—responsible government was firmly established. Responsible government was perfectly established in Canada. And what is the result? Notwithstanding all the convulsions that have taken place during the last year in Europe, and which in former times, in consequence of the discontented state of the French population in Canada, might have led to disasters, in Canada the most perfect tranquillity has been preserved. And it was only this day I saw a letter from Canada, in which it is stated that the most perfect tranquillity exists there; that the people feel perfect satisfaction with the government they possess, as also with the upright administration of the noble Lord at the head of that government. Again, in New Brunswick, responsible government has been established, as a reference to the despatches laid on the table of the House will show. Nova Scotia, it may be remarked in passing, has representative institutions; and in Newfoundland representative government has been established; and, I must say, with regard to Newfoundland, that the conduct of the Governor of that colony is above all praise. He has carried the population through two winters of deep distress, seeking no aid from this country, but carrying them through it, and leading them to habits of useful industry, which will probably prevent that colony from suffering again from the inevitable vicissitudes of the seasons, and the fisheries. He has introduced the cultivation of grain, which is found to be of excellent quality. I now will cross the globe to our Australian colonies. In the course of a very short time I shall lay a Bill on the table of this House to confer representative institutions upon all our Australian colonies. And why? Because in those colonies there is a British population; that population is accustomed to representative government; they know its forms and usages; they know how to wield them and use them, I hope, with moderation and wisdom; and I hope that Bill, with the consent of this House, will be carried in the present Session of Parliament. Can I say more than that? The hon. Gentleman says we have not given a local government to Ceylon. Now, I tell him, that my noble Friend (Earl Grey) has not, and will not, and that I will not either, take that responsibility. My noble Friend is the last person to take it, when it might be injurious to the colony, nor would Earl Grey, because it might obtain for him a temporary popularity, condescend to seek for it by so doing. I suppose that hon. Gentlemen will taunt me because we have not established a representative government in the Mauritius; but we feel that, with its divided races, with its divided population, and divided interests, it is not in a condition to receive it. But a new Governor has been appointed, who was personally unknown to my noble Friend; and here I would observe, that I wish the hon. Gentleman would be even occasionally a little just in his views. He might have said, that now a governor is appointed to that colony who has acquired a distinguished Indian reputation, and who is a total stranger to my noble Friend; who goes out to inquire into the establishments there, to revise taxation, and to give, I hope, new facilities to the trade of that colony; that at least all that a Secretary of State could do was done for that colony. But already a great deal has been done in that colony: the total amount of taxation reduced is 37,000*l.* Now, I think I have answered the hon. Gentleman on most of the points which he has brought under the consideration of the House. I cannot say that the temper and spirit in which this discussion is introduced, is likely to benefit the people of those colonies. I consider that a calm inquiry, so conducted as to command the aid and assistance of the Colonial Department, so conducted as to create rather satisfaction than discontent in the colonies, might be useful; but I cannot think, unless the inquiry is conducted in a manner very different from that in which the subject was introduced, that it can lead to much practical good. As the hon. Gentleman has the conduct of the Committee, I tender to him my aid and assistance. He shall want for none that I can give him. Again, I say, I fear no inquiry. My noble Friend (Earl Grey) fears no inquiry—his patronage has been honestly administered; and a series of names has been placed at the head of the colonial governments which does no discredit to those who have appointed them. The hon. Gentleman, in that spirit in which he introduced the question, said, 'I think that no governor had been appointed whose conduct reflected credit upon himself or benefit upon the colony.' [MR. BAILLIE: No, no!] Well, then, what did you say? [MR. BAILLIE: No Colonial Minister.] I could give you the names of Colonial Ministers—for instance, upon your own side there is Lord Stanley—who proposed some important Acts, though, perhaps, the hon. Gentleman will not reckon the abolition of slavery amongst them. And with regard to the patronage of my noble Friend (Earl Grey), I boldly say here—and the hon. Gentleman, if he can, may impeach it—that the persons appointed by him have been distinguished for their high character, and that their government of the colonies has been marked by great ability. If I turn to New Zealand, I want no better proof in support of my assertion than this, that I find the prosperity of that great colony restored under great difficulties. Peace has been restored—trade is increasing—the revenues are increasing—the native population is becoming gradually attached to the Europeans, and there is a general harmony and union of parties throughout the colony—reflecting the highest credit on Sir George Grey, who now administers its government. I have already alluded to the Governor of Newfoundland, and I will now further say, that never was there a governor who more assiduously or beneficially discharged his duties. I have alluded to Canada, and I may fearlessly say, that never was there at the head of that Government an abler man than Lord Elgin. I may refer to Sir Edmund Head, in New Brunswick; and who, I ask, will impeach his character or conduct? In fact, I care not where I go, I find the same thing. The hon. Gentleman has said that Lord Torrington—as usual he makes a personal attack—was one of the Lords of the Bedchamber. That he was a Lord of the Bedchamber should not be considered at that side of the House as a reason for holding him to be totally incapable. There may be able men Lords of the Bedchamber; and Lord Torrington has shown himself to be a man of ability. His means were small—he was a Peer of the realm—he increased his fortune by agricultural industry and skill—and he was selected by a body of intelligent directors, namely, the directors of the South-Eastern Railway, as an associate. I was present at a dinner given to Lord Torrington by those gentlemen on leaving this country, and I heard the highest opinion expressed by them with respect to his abilities and business-like habits. Now, Sir, I have not flinched from even the favourite case of the hon. Gentleman—he kept the others out of sight; nor have I shrunk from that one which he thought perhaps I should not touch upon; and feeling that the Committee will be carried if the Amendment be agreed to—I do not know whether the hon. Gentleman will agree to the Amendment. [MR. BAILLIE: No, no!] I thought not. I shall presume the Amendment will be carried, and the hon. Gentleman will nevertheless preside over the Committee; and I will venture to say that the more inquiry there is into the administration of my noble Friend (Earl Grey) in the Colonial Office, the more readily will impartial men say—it was wise, honest, just, and sagacious. I do not like at this moment, when obloquy is surrounding my noble Friend, to shrink from my share of it. I am ready to share with him that obloquy—I wish I could only share in one-half of his great and beneficial measures. Believing, as I do, that he has administered the patronage of his office honestly and wisely, I esteem it an honour to stand up here at this moment—I will not say to defend him—but to make this statement to the House, and I confidently leave it to the judgment of the House of Commons."

Sir W. MOLESWORTH deprecated the personal attacks which had been made during the present discussion, since they led to the impression that the grievances of the colonies could be remedied by removing this or that Governor, or this or that Colonial Secretary. The case of Ceylon was very simple. Excessive expenditure produced financial embarrassment; financial embarrassment led to the imposition of injudicious taxes; and injudicious taxes were part, at least, of the cause of the disturbances which took place last year in Ceylon. In 1843 the expenditure of Ceylon was about 326,000*l.*; four years afterwards, in 1847, it amounted to 496,000*l.*, an increase of 170,000*l.*, or more than fifty per cent in four years. Therefore, though in the same interval the revenue had increased from 380,000*l.* to 440,000*l.*—an increase of rather more than 15 per cent—the expenditure in 1847 far exceeded the revenue, and the finances of Ceylon became embarrassed. Of what did this expenditure consist? I will endeavour to give the House a brief account of it for the year 1845. In that year the expenditure amounted to 448,000*l.* It may be divided into two parts: one part is called "extraordinary expenditure," and is annually voted by a legislative council, composed of the governor, a majority of official members, and a few un-official members nominated by the Colonial Office. It is an expenditure of a fluctuating description, and consists of contingent and provisional charges on account of the various departments of government, and of sums paid for repairing and making roads and bridges, and for other public works. It amounted in 1825 to 225,000*l.* I am unable to give a detailed account of it. I can only state that it has gone on rapidly increasing, from 159,000*l.* in 1844, to 252,000*l.* in 1846, an increase of about 70 per cent in two years. The other part of the expenditure of Ceylon amounted, in 1845, to 223,000*l.*, and is called "fixed" expenditure, because it may not be diminished without the sanction of the Colonial Office—a sanction which is rarely, if ever, given. On the contrary, the "fixed" expenditure has likewise gone on rapidly increasing, and in 1846 it was about 31,000*l.* more than it was in 1844. It consists of payments made for salaries, pensions, and military charges. The military charges amounted in 1845 to 57,000*l.* Of this sum, 24,000*l.* was a contribution to the military chest. This contribution, though generally included under the head of "fixed" expenditure, appears to be annually voted by the Legislative Council; for Sir Emerson Tennent, the Colonial Secretary of Ceylon, now being anxious to diminish expenditure, has omitted it from the colonial estimates of this year, and transferred its payment to the British Exchequer; a proceeding which, I am afraid, will not be very agreeable to us in these days of economy: for, to our usual military expenditure of 110,000*l.*, on account of Ceylon, we shall have to add 24,000*l.*, making in all 134,000*l.* a year—certainly a very heavy price for a colony, the declared value of our exports to which, in 1845, did not exceed 307,000*l.* Lord Torrington promised us, in one of his despatches, that no bill should be sent in to us, on account of the late disturbances—here, however, is the bill, to the amount of 24,000*l.* We are asked to pay this sum, because last year the expenditure of Ceylon exceeded the revenue, in consequence of the cost of suppressing the disturbances. Be assured, that whenever we hear of riots and disturbances in any of our colonies, if we look long enough and carefully enough, we shall find the consequences, though often much disguised, in the expenditure. The remainder of the "fixed military expenditure" of Ceylon is for colonial pay and allowances to the troops, in addition to their ordinary pay. These allowances cost the colony, in 1845, 33,000*l.* I hope Sir Emerson Tennent will not pursue his career of economy and retrenchment by transferring the payment of them to the British Exchequer. The next head of "fixed" expenditure to which I will refer, embraces the salaries paid to the officers of the various departments of government—namely, the civil, the ecclesiastical, the revenue, and the judicial departments. The total amount of the salaries in 1845 was about 132,000*l.* They were distributed in the following manner:—First, to the officers of the civil establishment about 47,000*l.* Under this head 7,000*l.* were paid to the governor, who being in 1845 a general officer in command of the troops, received, I believe, on that account, an additional 1,500*l.* out of the military allowances. Some persons consider that this salary is excessive; on the other hand, Lord Grey told the Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates that "it is extremely good economy to give liberal salaries to governors;" that "the best principle to go upon is to select the best governors that can be obtained, and then to rely upon them." I acknowledge the force of this argument, if the principle be strictly adhered to; which has not generally been the practice of the Colonial Office. Under this head the colonial secretary had a salary of 2,000*l.*; since raised, I believe, to 2,500*l.* The colonial secretary has now two principal assistants; one at 1,000*l.*, the other at 800*l.* a year: the treasurer and the auditor had each 1,500*l.* a year—the salary of the latter was raised by Lord Stanley to 1,725*l.* The civil engineer and his assistant had salaries of 800*l.* and 500*l.* respectively; the commissioner of roads had 800*l.* a year; the three master attendants of Colombo, Galle, and Trincomalee, had salaries of 700*l.*, 500*l.*, and 400*l.* respectively; the postmaster-general had a salary of 400*l.*, raised by Lord Stanley to 550*l.*; the superintendent of the lunatic asylum 500*l.* a year; in all, 18,755*l.*—divided among the thirteen superior officers of this department—giving them, on the average, about 1,400*l.* a year. In addition to these superior officers, there are some twenty-eight inferior officers, with salaries of from 100*l.* to 300*l.* I next come to the salaries of the ecclesiastical establishment—an expensive item in most of our Crown colonies. In Ceylon, the Europeans are few in number—I do not know the number at present—in 1846, they did not exceed 6,000; they are divided into numerous sects, Catholics, Presbyterians, Wesleyans, Baptists, members of the Church of England, &c. Their ministers, according to Lord Torrington's report of 1847, are far from acting in concert, and perplex the natives with the open rivalry of contending sects. Some of the natives are Mahometans, but the great majority are followers of Buddha or Bramah; among them are no real Christians. "Multitudes (according to Lord Torrington) call themselves Christians in public, but in secret they are still more closely attached to the doctrines of the Buddhists and the Hindoo mythology;" and, according to the same authority, the vast preponderance of these pretended Christians profess to be Roman Catholics. Therefore we have given them a Church of England establishment, and annually extract from the pockets of the Cingalese a salary of 2,000*l.* for the archdeacon, now Bishop of Colombo, and various stipends, one of 900*l.*, four of 700*l.*, one of 500*l.*, one of 400*l.*, and other smaller sums to colonial chaplains at Colombo, Galle, Kandy, Trincomalee, and Jaffna—in all, the "fixed" ecclesiastical establishment amounts to 9,000*l.* a year, exclusive of grants from the Colonial treasury for the building of churches. The next department to which I will refer is that of the revenue. Its officers received in 1845 about 39,000*l.* Under this head are included the agents of the provinces. Ceylon is divided into five provinces—the northern, southern, eastern, western, and central; over each province there is a Government agent, receiving a salary of from 1,200*l.* to 1,500*l.* a year. Each Government agent has from two to four assistant agents, with salaries varying from 200*l.* to 850*l.* a year. It is one of the duties of these officers to make the Government acquainted from time to time with the state of the native population, with their wants, wishes, and grievances; but this duty a large portion of the agents are incompetent to perform, in consequence of their ignorance of the native language; the natives, therefore, have great difficulties in making known their grievances to the Government; and the Government have equal difficulties in making its measures understood by the natives, and in removing erroneous impressions. This was evident in the insurrection of last year. Some of the natives deceived themselves with regard to the intentions of the Government; in two small towns or villages, a riotous rabble assembled; destroyed some furniture and papers, broke some doors and windows, and proclaimed a couple of their companions kings of Kandy. The Government, ignorant of any discontent, were taken by surprise—surprise begot fear, fear begot cruelty—the Government hung and shot without stint or mercy. Then, for the first time, Lord Grey discovered what he terms "the principal fault in the system now existing in Ceylon;" and he communicated to Lord Torrington the information that a knowledge of the native languages on the part of the agents and servants of the Government was a necessary qualification for the effective discharge of their most important duties. This extraordinary discovery had already been made by Lord Glenelg and Lord Stanley. They both laid down the rule, that no European should be appointed to a responsible situation unless he had acquired one or both of the native languages. This rule has in practice been utterly disregarded. May Lord Grey be more successful in enforcing it, for the fatal consequences of neglecting it have been written in blood in the annals of Ceylon! The last department to which I shall refer is the judicial. The salaries paid in 1845 to persons connected with this department amounted to about 38,000*l.*, out of which the chief justice received 2,500*l.*; the two puisne judges, 1,500*l.* each; the Queen's Advocate and his deputy, 1,200*l.* and 1,000*l.* respectively; the registrar, 600*l.* In each of the five provinces, there was a superior district judge, several inferior ones, and other law officers; the five superior judges had from 1,000*l.* to 1,200*l.* a year each, the inferior district judges and other law officers, with salaries of from 200*l.* to 800*l.* a year, amounted in 1845 to twenty-nine in number; in all there were, in 1845, forty legal appointments filled by Europeans, whose united salaries amounted to 26,000*l.*, which would give on the average 650*l.* as the salary for each officer. It is evident, therefore, we furnish the Cingalese with an ample supply of lawyers. There is some doubt, however, about the quality of the article so abundantly supplied. The merchants, planters, and traders of Ceylon, whose petition I lately presented, state as a notorious fact, that persons without ever having studied or practised the law are taken from other branches of the public service, and appointed to high judicial stations. This statement is confirmed in one of Lord Torrington's despatches. It is also notorious that, at times, the Colonial Office has bestowed important legal situations in Ceylon on briefless barristers, ignorant of all law, and unacquainted with the manners, customs, and languages of the natives. Therefore, as might be expected, law and practice are completely at variance in Ceylon. I state this fact upon very high authority —upon that of Sir Arthur Buller, for seven year's Queen's Advocate of that colony, now a judge in India. In November, 1842, Sir Arther Buller addressed a letter to Sir Colin Campbell, then Governor of Ceylon, in which Sir Arthur stated—

> "So generally are strict law and practice at variance in this colony, and so open is its past legislation to attack, that I would undertake myself, in a month, to plunge it into utter anarchy."

These statements were made to the Governor by Sir Arthur Buller, in his capacity of Queen's Advocate, in consequence of a judge having injudiciously made, or pretended to make, an attempt to reconcile his practice with the law, for which offence he was immediately removed from his seat on the bench. This case was brought under the consideration of the House in 1847. The last head of fixed expenditure is for pensions. I regret that I have no detailed account of the pension-list of Ceylon. The sum so expended in 1845 appears to me to have been enormous; it amounted to 34,000*l.*; since then I believe it has increased, and is likely still to increase. I think the House will be somewhat astonished when informed of the reason for this increase. The House may perhaps have heard that, some years ago, there was a mania for coffee-planting in Ceylon; it seized upon the European residents in that colony. It is said that governors disregarded their duties, judges neglected their courts, archdeacons and ministers of religion forgot their sacred functions; and all hastened to plant coffee. However this may be, certain it is that in 1844 Lord Stanley bitterly complained of the low state of feeling, the want of energy and proper pride, which existed among the members of the civil service. He ordered them to attend to their duties, and to divest themselves of their coffee estates. Then, to remunerate them for not being permitted to neglect their duties, he raised the salaries of several of the civil servants, and augmented the scale of their pensions and retired allowances. To this proceeding Lord Torrington attributed the increase in the fixed expenditure of Ceylon; which increase amounted to 34,000*l.*, in the interval between 1844 and 1846. I hope I have succeeded in giving the House an idea of the fixed expenditure of Ceylon for the year 1845. That expenditure, I have already said, amounted to 223,000*l.*; it consisted—1. Of military charges to the amount of 57,000*l.*; those charges are to be reduced at our expense to 33,000*l.* 2. It consisted of salaries to the officers of the civil, ecclesiastical, revenue, and judicial departments of Government. These salaries amounted in 1845 to about 132,000*l.*; of this sum about one-half, or 66,000*l.*, was distributed between some 106 or 107

European gentlemen, in sums varying from the minimum of 200*l.* to the maximum of 7,000*l.*, the average being 650*l.* a year. For these same gentlemen, or their predecessors, a pension list has been provided, which amounted to 34,000*l.* It must now be self-evident to the House to whom and for what purposes a colony like Ceylon is pre-eminently useful. It is valuable as containing numerous appointments, with comfortable salaries, well fitted for the acceptance of political adventurers, of the poor relations, connexions, and needy dependants of men possessing political power, and of the rest of that tribe of privileged incapables for whose profit the Colonial Office collects the revenues and administers the affairs of such colonies as Ceylon. And our ignorant and trusting constituents are taught to believe that such costly possessions are the brightest jewels of the British Crown. I now conclude my account of the expenditure of Ceylon, by repeating that since 1843, it has increased 50 per cent—that it has far exceeded the revenue, though the revenue in the same interval increased 15 per cent; therefore the finances of Ceylon are in a deplorable state. The Colonial Government has had to borrow money from the banks, and intends to repudiate a part of its usual payments on account of military charges; therefore, unless the expenditure of the colony be revised and reduced, it must speedily become bankrupt, and an increasing burthen to Great Britain. Let the House bear in mind that in consequence of the expenditure of Ceylon exceeding the revenue, we had to pay for that colony, exclusive of military and naval expenditure, 926,000*l.* in the interval between 1811 and 1823, and 500,000*l.* in the interval between 1827 and 1831; in all, nearly 1,500,000*l.* in twenty years. Let us therefore take warning in time, and resolve at once that the expenditure of Ceylon be immediately and carefully revised with a view to its reduction. Having proved that excessive expenditure has produced the financial embarrassment of Ceylon, I will proceed to show that financial embarrassment led to the imposition of injudicious taxes by the Colonial Government. It is but fair, however, to the Colonial Government, to state that Sir Emerson Tennent, in a speech addressed to the Legislative Council in December last, attributed a portion of the difficulties of the Colonial Government to a "serious fallacy" in the instructions given by Lord Grey to Lord Torrington in 1847. I must call the attention of the House to those instructions. They are dated 15th June, 1847. They were founded upon the report of a Committee appointed by Lord Grey, in the same year, to review the finance and commerce of the island of Ceylon. The Committee consisted of the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Hawes), the hon. Gentleman the Member for Devonport (Mr. Tufnell), Mr. S. G. S. Lefevre, and Mr. Bird. They were furnished with reports from Sir Emerson Tennent and others, and with data from the Colonial Office, which are expressly described as drawn from authentic official sources. Their report is dated 13th April, 1847: it commences with an account of the state of the finances of Ceylon. This report is ably written, and would have been a valuable public document, had its data been less incorrect, and its assumptions less erroneous. Unfortunately, strange errors are to be found in its pages, which have led to the most erroneous conclusions. For instance, in the first page, the expenditure for 1842 is set down at 301,791*l.* 0*s.* 5*d.* This sum is about 30,000*l.* less than the actual expenditure in the year in question. In this case, it appears from another Parliamentary paper, that the error arose from omitting the sums paid by the Ceylon agent in England on account of pensions, allowances, &c. Again, in the second page, the expenditure for 1845 is ranged under seven heads; against each head, certain sums are set down as the expenditure for 1845. If those sums were correct, when added together the total would be 448,000*l.*, which was the expenditure of Ceylon in 1845; but, on adding them together, I find the result to be 425,000*l.* Here, therefore, is another error of 23,000*l.* a sum to that amount having been omitted from the charges voted by the Legislative Council. Again, in the first page, the expenditure for 1846 was estimated at 393,000*l.* The sum actually expended was 498,000*l.*, or 25 per cent beyond the estimates. This miscalculation seems to me extraordinary; for this report was signed by the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies on the 13th April, 1847, and was approved of by the Secretary of State for the Colonies in his despatch of the 18th June, 1847; consequently, several months after the termination of the financial year of Ceylon, the expenditure of which was under-estimated in so extraordinary a degree. There is an error of equal magnitude, though not so extraordinary with regard to the expenditure of 1847; for that year the estimate of the Committee was 418,000*l.*, the actual expenditure about 496,000*l.* The last error to which I shall refer is the strangest of all. The Committee state "that the balances in the hands of the public accountants were, on the 31st December, 1845, 210,000*l.*; on the 31st March, 1846, 208,000*l.*" All wrong; for, in fact they never much exceeded half that sum. In this case the cause of the error is so extraordinary a one, that I should be almost afraid to state it, if I could not quote in proof of my correctness the authority both of Lord Torrington and Sir Emerson Tennent. The error is without parallel, except in the annals of fraudulent bankruptcy. It appears that for a series of years, beginning from 1836, the treasury of Ceylon has been in the habit of returning the liabilities of the colony as assets. It appears that a quantity of Government notes, payable on demand, had been created, to the amount of about 90,000*l.* Of this paper about one half was in circulation, the other half in the treasury. The dormant notes in the treasury were included among the balances, which were carried to the credit of the Government, and the notes in circulation were omitted from the liabilities. This was just as if the Bank of England, in giving an account of its affairs, should reckon among its treasure all its cancelled notes, and should omit from its liabilities all its notes in circulation. In this manner the treasury balances were swelled beyond their real amount by 90,000*l.* This error was unknown to the Colonial Office, till detected by Lord Torrington in 1847. From these erroneous data and incorrect estimates the Ceylon Committee arrived most logically at the false conclusion—or "serious fallacy," as Sir Emerson Tennent calls it—which formed the basis of their report, and of Earl Grey's instructions to Lord Torrington. This conclusion was, "that it is evident, therefore, that in dealing with the finances of Ceylon, Her Majesty's Government may count on a large accumulated fund in hand; and, second, on a considerable annual surplus." When these words were written, the fund consisted chiefly of liabilities, and the surplus had become a large deficiency; and these events were occasioned, not by the revenue in 1846 or 1847 being less than the Committee estimated it would be—for in both years it exceeded their estimate—but by the extraordinary increase of expenditure in those two years. Proceeding upon the hypothesis of the great financial prosperity of Ceylon, the Committee recommended the immediate reduction of certain duties on exports, of which the European merchants had complained, and other measures to which I need not refer. Lord Grey adopted the report of the Committee, after having consulted, as he states, various Members of Her Majesty's Government, and the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury; and with their general concurrence the report was transmitted to Lord Torrington for his guidance. Now, I wish to cast censure on no one, but I think the House must acknowledge, that if five gentlemen of distinguished ability, including the two heads of the Colonial Department, could, after much study and labour, be so completely mistaken with regard to this colony, that position is incontrovertibly proved, which has been so often and so ably maintained in this House by the noble Lord the Secretary of State for the Colonies (Earl Grey), that it is impossible for any man, be his talents and industry what they may, adequately to administer such complicated affairs as those of the British colonies, scattered all over the globe. I do think, Sir, that Lord Torrington was much to be pitied on his arrival at Ceylon. Without doubt he expected to find there all the wealth of "Ormuz and of Ind," and to become a great commercial reformer. Instead thereof, he found a bankrupt exchequer, a deficient revenue, and erroneous instructions. He was placed in this dilemma—either he must obey his instructions, or not. If he disobeyed his instructions, and did not repeal the export duties, he said that he would have been assailed by the merchants, the planters, and all the most influential Europeans. If he obeyed his instructions, the financial difficulties of the colony would be increased, unless he could reduce the expenditure or increase taxation. The noble Lord (Viscount Torrington), probably with the advice of his council, adopted the latter alternative. The export duties on cinnamon were diminished; those on coffee and other articles were abolished; a circular, very creditable to the noble Lord, was issued, recommending prompt and vigilant economy in all the departments of the State; and lastly, the legislative council enacted certain tax ordinances, some of which, I maintain, were very injudicious. For those ordinances I do not think that blame should fall chiefly on the noble Lord. I may assume, without any disrespect to the noble Lord, that when he left these shores he was as little acquainted with the languages, laws, manners, customs, wants, interests, and religion of the Cingalese, as he was with the finances of the colony. He must, therefore, have trusted chiefly to his council. They were most to blame; for it must be acknowledged that, as soon as he discovered his errors, he retraced his steps with regard to the ordinances in question. I will not repeat what has been already said with regard to these ordinances. I will merely observe, that about the beginning of last year, seven tax ordinances were enacted: one for increasing the revenue from stamps, one for licensing carts and boats, one for licensing carriages and palanqueens let on hire; and the four ordinances called the shop tax, the dog tax, the gun tax, and the compulsory labour tax. The four last were the ordinances which have been so much complained of. The imposition of the shop tax every one acknowledges to have been injudicious; it was repealed before the close of the year. As regards the dog tax, I agree with the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hawes) that dogs are a great nuisance in the towns and villages of Ceylon; and if the effort to destroy them had been limited to such places, no well-founded objection to such a measure could have been urged; but the attempt to tax the dogs in the country parts was absurd; no one would own the dogs; no revenue could be obtained from such a tax; and before the end of the year it was also repealed. I now come to the gun tax. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hawes) has made a great mistake respecting that tax, in declaring that it was imposed only with a view to registration, and not to obtain revenue. The hon. Gentleman did not appear to have remembered that that tax was first proposed by Sir Emerson Tennent (in his report on Ceylon) who was for a tax of 1*s.* 6*d.* and not 2*s.* 6*d.*, and the reason why he proposed it was, that it would prove an abundant source of revenue. [MR. HAWES: I did not say that the gun tax was imposed only for registration.] He was sorry he had misunderstood the hon. Gentleman, but he thought he had taken a correct note of what he said at the moment. The natives would not have objected to the tax, had the only object sought been that of registration; but they did object to a tax which made it necessary for them to come every year from a distant part of their province to apply for a license, not in their own but in the English language, with which few of them were acquainted; the application being made to a Government agent, who would think nothing of keeping them waiting for two or three days. It was not registration but an annual tax which was desired; and the hon. Member for Inverness-shire (Mr. Baillie) was perfectly correct in saying that the gun tax had been substantially repealed. The last tax to which I shall refer was the compulsory labour tax. It consisted of three days' labour, or a commutation of 3*s.* Therefore, it was a poll tax of 3*s.* on every man who could pay that amount. As such, it was contrary to all principles of equality of taxation. In fact, it was a graduated property tax in the wrong direction. Worse than that, it belonged to the abominable system of compulsory labour. No doubt it differed from that system as regarded details. The great mistake of this tax was its universality, which Lord Torrington declared to be its principle. It compelled the Buddhist priest, who was vowed to poverty, to work like other natives. It was said, indeed, that the Buddhist priests frequently broke their vows, and that those vows very much resembled the old *nolo episcopari* of the bishops, being never observed except when they could not be broken; but there was a great difference between the breaking of a vow in secret, and openly violating it. Surely it was a most unwise, impolitic, and unstatesmanlike proceeding, to offer such an insult to a religious people as that of compelling their priests openly to violate their vows. Well, this tax had been repealed by Lord Torrington, as far as the priests of Buddha were concerned. What was the consequence? The Bishop of Colombo wrote a letter, in which he claimed a similar exemption for every Christian minister. Lord Torrington refused to comply with his request, on the ground that if he did so, he must grant the same exemption to the ministers of all other religions, and then he did not know when the exemptions would end; whereupon the bishop asserted that the exemption of the Buddhist priests alone would produce among the natives an impression that the religion of those priests was superior to Christianity. Now, I think it must be clear to every one that I have fully established my position, that the imposition of these taxes was very injudicious. They were either right or wrong in the spring of last year. If they were right, surely it was very injudicious to repeal them before the termination of the year. In either alternative, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hawes) could not escape from the conclusion that the conduct of the Government of Ceylon had been most injudicious. It cannot be denied that they produced discontent in Ceylon. Lord Torrington, in his despatch of the 9th July, acknowledges that they did; but he asserts that the ordinances had been partially misunderstood or designedly misrepresented. The fact was, that the natives, finding their carts, their boats, their shops, their dogs, their guns, and even their polls, all suddenly taxed, fancied that all their other possessions would also be taxed; and they were accidentally confirmed in this belief by a return which had been required from them of their jack and cocoa-nut trees, their cattle, even their women and their children: not understanding the value of statistical information, except for purposes of taxation, they fancied that all these articles were also to be taxed. It was difficult to dispel these errors; for the European agents of the Government were (as I have already said) generally ignorant of the native languages, and held but little intercourse with the natives, and the native agents were probably as ignorant of the use of statistics as their fellow-countrymen. Afterwards, but when it was too late, Sir Emerson Tennent and Mr. Wodehouse were sent to give the natives a course of lectures on these ordinances; and it appears they removed many erroneous impressions. It was unfortunate that this proceeding had not been adopted before, instead of after the disturbances. Lord Torrington has stated in his despatch of the 9th August, that the minds of the people had been perverted and excited against the ordinances by one or two turbulent European agitators. This is the stereotyped official mode of explaining discontent. Whenever a Government are too idle or too ignorant to ascertain the real causes of discontent, or when they are anxious to conceal that there are good grounds for discontent, they invariably attribute it to the nefarious machinations of designing agitators. But all history proves that no agitator can of himself produce agitation, unless there be pre-existing causes of discontent. Those causes existing, they give birth to the agitator, who, placing himself at the head of the movement, may for a time succeed in guiding it, and thus appear to the ignorant to be its creator. In this case Lord Torrington produced, as proof of his assertion, a letter to the editor of the *Colombo Observer*, which is said to have been translated into Cingalese, and circulated among the natives. Undoubtedly this letter contained some unwise and injudicious expressions; but, substantially, it merely asserted what is asserted in the petitions from the natives, namely, that the Government had increased the burdens of the people for the benefit of the "gentlemen," as the Europeans are called. Now, it cannot be denied that the fixed expenditure of Ceylon was increased by Lord Stanley mainly to give larger salaries and better pensions to the "gentlemen;" and the extraordinary expenditure was also augmented by the legislative council in order to improve the roads to the coffee estates of the "gentlemen," who were complaining of low prices and the cost of conveyance. Again, the export duties were repealed to please the "gentlemen;" and the burden of taxation was transferred from their shoulders to those of the natives. [Mr. HAWES intimated dissent from this statement.] Let the hon. Gentleman look at the despatch of Lord Torrington, in which he considered the question whether he should or should not obey his instructions as to the repeal of the export duties. The substance of the despatch was this:—

> "If I repeal them, it will only be because such a feeling has been produced amongst the merchants and the European residents in this colony in favour of repealing them, that I should be sorry to disappoint their hopes."

I am far from saying that injudicious taxes were the sole causes of the disturbances which took place last year. It should be remembered, that the inhabitants of the interior have only been subjected to our dominion since 1815; that they have not, like the inhabitants of the maritime provinces, been accustomed for centuries to the rule of Europeans. Under our Government, the material condition of the Kandians has without doubt improved; but we have insulted and wounded their strongest feelings. Lord Torrington has stated that, within the last few years, measures have been strenuously urged, I presume by the Colonial Office, to suppress the Buddhist religion. What right have we to act in this manner? If we insist upon ruling over millions of the followers of Buddha or Bramah, we are bound to treat their religion with all tenderness. Now, what has been our conduct with regard to the most esteemed relic of the Buddhist faith—I mean that which is called the tooth of Buddha? The superstition is, that to the possession of this relic the sovereignty of Kandy is for ever attached. In 1815 we obtained possession of it; in 1818 it was stolen from us; it became the standard of a rebellion which only terminated with its recovery; for years afterwards we treated it with honour, and carefully guarded it, until, in 1847, the Colonial Office could no longer endure the notion of sanctioning a superstition, and Lord Torrington was ordered to deliver up the relic, as worthless, to the charge of the priests of the temple of Kandy. This contempt wounded the pride and religious feelings of the Kandians, and at the same time produced a belief among the superstitious that ere long our reign over Kandy would terminate. Was such a proceeding wise or politic? I can understand a fierce bigot—a Cortez or a Pizarro—saying to the Cingalese, "Here, take your idols; place them in the front of your battle; we defy you, and will sweep you and your superstition from off the face of the earth:" that would have been plain and unmistakeable language. But what has been our conduct? As soon as the disturbances commenced, the Government agent and the commandant hastened to the temple of Kandy, and in the presence of the priests they assured themselves that the relic had not been removed, and took precautions for its safe custody in future; thus offering the most striking homage that could be paid to the idol; convincing its worshippers that our disbelief in it was feigned, and that in the hour of danger our only safety was in the possession of the sacred talisman. Our conduct, therefore, has been impolitic, inconsistent, and absurd. What should we now do with this relic? Place it with all honour on board ship, transfer it to the British Museum, and there let it fulfil the prophecy, and remain until Britannia ceases to be Queen of Ceylon. Thus bigotry sowed the seeds of discontent, which injudicious laws ripened into disturbances. Did those disturbances constitute a rebellion, or were they merely local riots? On the 9th of July, hardly three weeks before the commencement of the disturbances, Lord Torrington stated that he "had abundant reason to think that the mass of the Kandians were by no means disaffected." Was this assertion correct or incorrect? If incorrect, and the mass of the Kandians were disaffected, then it follows that the Government of Ceylon and the majority of its agents were completely ignorant of the feelings of the Kandians. On the other hand, if the assertion were correct, and the mass of the Kandians were by no means disaffected, then it follows that these disturbances were not a rebellion, but merely local riots. It appears to me that both of these conclusions were true. That the Government were ill acquainted with the feeling of the natives, is virtually acknowledged in Lord Grey's despatch of the 24th of October: that the disturbances were merely local riots, appears to me proved by the official accounts given of them by eyewitnesses, and which are referred to in the margin of Lord Torrington's despatches. Read, for instance, the account of the disturbances at Matelle and at Kurnegalle. A riotous rabble, acting without concert, entered two small towns, broke some doors and windows, and committed various acts of pillage. Two kings were proclaimed, both natives of the low country—an inferior class, whom the proud chiefs of the interior despise, their own kings being of pure Malabar descent. A few troops easily dispersed the mob, killing some scores and wounding some hundreds. The damage done to property was inconsiderable; the injury done to the persons of Europeans consisted in tying one agent to the railing of a verandah, and slightly wounding one soldier. All was nearly over before martial law could be proclaimed. Then came the trials of the prisoners. Now, mark this strange anomaly. Those who were captured in the midst of the riots, though probably the more guilty, were captured before the proclamation of martial law, therefore they could only, fortunately for them, be tried by the ordinary tribunals; those who were subsequently captured were handed over to the courts-martial. In the forty days that elapsed between the 5th of August and the 14th of September they condemned to death nineteen persons, of whom only one was recommended to mercy; the remainder were shot. They commenced on the 5th of August by shooting one of the "kings," and hung his body on a tree as a scarecrow. They terminated on the 14th of September, six weeks after the disturbances were over, by shooting four of the followers of the other "king." On the 26th of August they condemned a priest of Buddha to death:

the man earnestly implored, not for mercy, but that his religion might not be outraged by executing him in his sacred vestments. Lord Torrington states they shot him in full robes. I was surprised to hear the hon. Under Secretary for the Colonies attempt to excuse such conduct; and I was glad to perceive that his speech almost failed him in the attempt. What would have been said had it so occurred that a priest had been engaged in the late rebellion in Ireland?—would any one have dared to have either hung or shot him in his priestly robes? In the same despatch Lord Torrington expresses his dissatisfaction at the conduct of the Supreme Court in acquitting four other priests of the temple of Dambool, who had been tried for treason; and thereon praises "the certainty and wholesome terror of martial law." Whether Lord Torrington be or be not, strictly speaking, responsible for these military executions, I leave to those who understand martial law to determine; but it is evident he might have stopped them at any moment by putting an end to martial law. His despatches show that he cordially approved of those executions; that if it had been necessary to submit them to him for approval, he would have sanctioned them; and that he wished for more executions. This is proved by his letter to Sir Anthony Oliphant, Chief Justice of Ceylon. Seventeen prisoners, captured in the midst of the disturbance, but before the proclamation of martial law, had been sentenced to death by the Supreme Court; some of them were recommended to mercy by the jury, all of them by the judge, for the reason contained in this extract from the letter which Sir A. Oliphant addressed to the Governor on the subject:—

> "I learn that some twenty persons have been already shot for their share in this rebellion by the courts-martial; I, therefore, think, when it is considered that no one European has been put to death—that one soldier only has been wounded by the rebels—that no persons have appeared in warlike array against the troops since the outbreaks at Matelle and Kurnegalle—that the blood which has been already spilt is sufficient for all purposes, whether for vindication of the law or for example."

From this opinion of the Chief Justice of Ceylon, Lord Torrington dissented, and he declares that he should have let the law take its course if the recommendations of the chief justice had not been made public. Therefore the chief justice compelled the Governor, against his will, to spare the lives of many offenders. This is a serious charge against a chief justice. I ask, therefore, the Colonial Office to answer distinctly this question, whether the chief justice was right in thinking that sufficient blood had been shed, or whether Lord Torrington was right in thinking that more blood ought to have been shed? I will not trouble the House with an account of the confiscations or sequestrations of many thousand pounds' worth of property belonging to suspected but innocent persons. I must, however, state, on the authority of Lord Torrington's despatch of November 6th, that in some instances the properties of persons were sequestrated, not because they were implicated in the disturbances—not because they were absent from home beyond the permitted period—but because they "were suspected of disaffection owing to their connexion with parties implicated" in the disturbances. In the same despatch, Lord Torrington stated the manner in which he had treated the two most wealthy Kandians, one of them being the head of all the Kandian chiefs. They had been arrested on suspicion; their landed property was sequestrated, their moveable property was sold; fortunately for them, they could not be tried by court-martial, and there was not evidence enough to convict them before the Supreme Court; therefore they were liberated on bail; but Lord Torrington did not deem it expedient to restore their property. Subsequently they were again arrested; but as it was found that nothing could be proved against them, they were ultimately set at liberty, and Lord Torrington has promised to restore their landed property, and to account for the proceeds of the sales of their moveable property. To complete his measures, Lord Torrington has submitted to the legislative council a bill of attainder and a bill of indemnity. The bill of indemnity was carried by the casting vote of the Governor. The only precedent quoted by Lord Torrington for such an ordinance, is that of the Cape of Good Hope in 1836. It requires, certainly, a lively imagination to discover any similarity between the riots in Kandy and the events which occurred at the Cape of Good Hope in 1834. In the December of that year, in the midst of profound peace, more than 20,000 armed barbarians, the fiercest savages on the face of the earth, burst into our colony, plundering, burning, massacring. In one week, 150,000 sheep and 100,000 head of cattle were swept away, 450 farmhouses were burnt, the frontier districts became a desert, and 7,000 of Her Majesty's subjects were reduced to utter destitution. The whole colony was in imminent peril. Nothing but energy and decision could save it. Sir Benjamin D'Urban proclaimed martial law over the frontier districts, and, with the aid of Sir Harry Smith, and of a few troops, succeeded in stopping the career of the triumphant savages. An indemnity bill was subsequently passed, which in one important particular was amended by Lord Glenelg. The Ceylon Indemnity Act is a copy of the unamended Bill of the Cape of Good Hope, and contains, in addition, that "striking provision" (as Lord Torrington called it) which he took from the Act of 1798 for enacting martial law in Ireland, and which enables Lord Torrington, by signing a certificate, to prevent any man from being questioned for an act done in the proclaimed provinces during the existence of martial law. As far, however, as Lord Torrington is concerned, the Indemnity Act is worthless, for I believe the law has been correctly laid down by Lord Glenelg, that the governor of a colony, being the representative of Her Majesty, is not amenable to the civil or military tribunals of the colony, but is responsible for acts done in his capacity of governor, to the Queen, to Parliament, and, in certain cases, to the Court of Queen's Bench at Westminster. To indemnify Lord Torrington an Imperial Act would be required. The last act of the government of Ceylon has been to repeal the obnoxious tax ordinances, or their more obnoxious provisions. This proceeding establishes in Ceylon a most important constitutional principle. In every organised government there is some constitutional mode by which the people can procure a redress of grievances. In this country it is by petitions to Parliament, in the pachalics of the Ottoman Porte it is by riot and rebellion, that the people make their complaints known; then hundreds are slaughtered, but their cries frequently reach the ears of the Grand Signor; their grievances are redressed, and a polite message is sent with a bowstring to the offending pacha. Might not Earl Grey study these precedents with some advantage to his pachalic of Ceylon, by sending an official bowstring to his Governor? In conclusion, I have shown that excessive and increasing expenditure, for which the Colonial Office was to blame, has produced financial embarrassment in the island of Ceylon—that financial embarrassment, and the ignorance of the Colonial Office, led to the enactment of injudicious taxes—that injudicious taxes, combined with the bigoted measures of the Colonial Office, were the causes of the late disturbances — that those disturbances, though followed by military executions, confiscations, and attainders, were, in the end, successful in so far forth that the injudicious taxes or their most obnoxious provisions were repealed. Of everything that has been done or undone in that colony, Lord Grey, as the head of the colonial system of this country, has expressed his entire approbation. It is evident, therefore, that the source of all these evils is to be found in the colonial system—in the attempt to govern, from a distance of many thousand miles, men of whose affairs we are necessarily ignorant—men wholly unlike us in race, manners, customs, language, and religion. The consequence is general mismanagement and universal discontent, especially in the Crown colonies. When that mismanagement becomes excessive, and the discontent grows loud, it sometimes reaches our ears—then only a few of us can spare time to learn something about it—the vast majority are obliged to trust to the statements of the official defenders of the system, and there the matter drops. So, I am afraid, it will be with regard to Ceylon. What ought to be done for the better government of that colony? I do not dream of Anglo-Saxon institutions for the Cingalese, nor do I believe in good government by a small oligarchy of European merchants. I must repeat my recommendation of last year, to transfer this colony to the East India Company. Physically and morally it belongs to our Indian empire; its productions and its races are those of India; when troops are required in Ceylon they are sent from India; when required in India they are sent from Ceylon. The great difficulty in governing Ceylon is, that men of superior ability will not go there; there is not a sufficient field for their ambition, consequently the civil servants of Ceylon, with some exceptions, are what Lord Stanley described them to be. By uniting Ceylon with India, Ceylon would have a share in the talent and official aptitude specially provided for India. It would probably be more economically governed than at present, for the expenditure of Ceylon per head of the population is about 50 per cent greater than that of India. And, lastly, we should save a military expenditure, which is now to be raised from 110,000*l.* to about 134,000*l.* a-year.

MR. ADDERLEY said, he could not but lament that so great and so national a question as this should have been so miserably met, first, by a tricky Amendment, and then by the hon. Under Secretary of the Colonies entering upon a simple, personal defence. First, as to the Amendment, it had manifestly been proposed under a misconception of the Motion against which it had been made; and then, when the Motion proposed was found to be different from that which it was supposed it would be, yet the Amendment was not withdrawn; and it was not withdrawn, because it was desired to give a temporary triumph to the Government on what was a collateral debate. That which should have been attended to was avoided, and that which they did not care to inquire about was pressed forward as the most fitting subject for consideration; and yet doing this, and pursuing this course, was an admission on the part of the Government of the faults with which it was charged. With regard to the defence made by the Under Secretary of State of the noble Lord (Earl Grey), he must say that he did not look upon this Motion as an attack upon the Government, or an individual. For himself, he said, that so far from being inclined to pass a vote of censure upon the noble Lord (Earl Grey), he was far more disposed to propose to him a vote of thanks; for if ever there was a man raised up by Providence to damn the system he supported, that noble Lord was the very man. He looked up with gratitude to Earl Grey, who, by the peculiarity of his character and his temper, brought to a crisis the difficulties and dangers with which they had been so long struggling. He did not look upon this as a vote of censure, or as an attack upon any person or party —he did not seek for an inquiry in order that it might implicate one Government more than another; but what he wanted to ascertain was, how they were to get out of the difficulties of the colonial system. They merely wanted information as to those circumstances which rendered their colonial administration one scene of disorder; they wanted to ascertain why and how it was that a system was persevered in which was destructive to their colonies, and a disgrace to the mother country. The hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent who had moved the Amendment, declared that he could not see upon what grounds British Guiana, the Mauritius, and Ceylon had been put into the one Motion—why three cases were put together, all different, all dissimilar, and all distinct from each other, and yet all showing the same disastrous results, in consequence of their colonial administration. It was because where circumstances were diametrically the opposite the same results arose, they might very fairly conclude that the principle was not peculiar to any one case. He said this with no party feeling, for he could not say to what party he belonged, nor who his leader might be; but this he said, that seeing the various disasters that had occurred in various colonies, and seeing that they could be traced to the same principle of government, he wished inqury to be made into that; and what he found fault with was, that no one seemed disposed to deal with that which was the main proposition for consideration. The particular case of Ceylon showed what were the faults of the system; and he could hardly wonder at Lord Torrington saying in one of his letters, "What a pity it was that Ceylon had been made a Crown colony, and separated from the continent." He believed the same remark had been made by Napoleon at the Peace of Amiens, who stated that he was perfectly content that England should keep Ceylon if it were made a Crown colony. There could, he believed, be no doubt that Napoleon had given expression to such an opinion. He said, then, that one of the grievous cases of Government control was, that men were appointed to these colonies without the necessary qualifications for government. It was asked what were Lord Torrington's claims to be sent out as Governor to Ceylon? The answer was, that Lord Torrington had shown his qualifications for office —and how? By the manner in which he had administered a farm in Kent. That was the answer of the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, who also told them that Lord Torrington had been chairman of the South Eastern Railway Company. The Under Secretary for the Colonies also said, in reply to the hon. Member for Inverness-shire (Mr. Baillie), that that hon. Gentleman had only alluded to the taxes laid on by Lord Torrington, and had made no reference to the reduction of duties effected by him; that is, the Under Secretary for the Colonies complained that the accusation was not made worse against Lord Torrington than what it had been when originally preferred. Lord Torrington, in the face of a deficient revenue, was determined upon carrying out free-trade notions; not content with dabbling with taxes, his Lordship, like a hero who seemed to be led on by a higher impulse to the achievement of some most difficult task, fancied that to make a revenue he had only to commence with an experiment in free trade; and hence he began by making a large reduction in export duties, then in abolishing all differential duties; and then, when his grand scheme had been set on foot, there was not a single despatch that came from him that did not complain of the deficiency becoming greater and greater, and that did not ask for assistance, whilst there was not one of his orders in council which did not announce a new tax, and they would even be found frequently to come in triplets. There were taxes of all sorts—on houses, dogs, carriages, roads; and the last, it might be observed, imposed in breach of faith with the colonists. From the time the alterations of the duties took place to the end of the blue book, there would be found not a single order in council from Lord Torrington which did not announce a new tax. At last an exasperated people rebelled. He was astonished, on this part of the subject, to hear the hon. Under Secretary for the Colonies reading letters from various officers in the provinces. He wondered the hon. Under Secretary did not ask what did the people say for themselves as to the cause of that rebellion? The unfortunate people stated over and over again in letters that were so well written as to show that they might be made capable of having a local government—they stated most plainly that nothing but the enormous taxes imposed upon them goaded them to rebellion—and hon. Gentlemen on the other side might well be supposed to sympathise with men who rebelled against unjust and enormous taxation. Remonstrances were made on the part of the people, and they were not very fairly replied to by Lord Torrington, who took a very high tone with them for venturing to "canvass his measures"—for such an expression was, he thought, used by the Governor. The rebellion was followed by numbers killed by the military, by men shot, and by severe punishments of various kinds. The history of the affair seemed monstrous from the beginning to the end, and yet the proceedings in the colony were defended by the Home Government, partly because they were more ignorant of Ceylon than their own Governor, who was on the spot, partly because he was their nominee, and partly because any Motion for inquiry into the administration of a colony was treated by the Government of the day as a vote of censure upon them. Now, what he wanted and what he hoped for was, to strip the question of all personality, in order that they might investigate the whole system of colonial administration. They ought to see whether they would not go back to the old principle of local government—he did not mean representative government, for there was a great difference between the two. He would tell them that the old book of Mr. E. G. Wakefield was bringing conviction to many men in and out of the House. What was wanted was not a triumph for party, but that all should combine together for the purpose of getting out of the difficulty in which they were now placed.

MR. SCOTT said, that the question before the House resolved itself into part of the general question, whether the colonies were well or ill governed. There were two classes of colonies, namely, the Crown and the representative colonies. The present Government had not thought fit to extend to the Crown colonies those institutions which the Members of it individually professed to admire and approve of; the Crown colonies were governed despotically by means of a governor sent out from Downing-street, instead of having a representative system conferred upon them. This was the cause of the discontent that had been exhibited in Ceylon and Guiana. The mode of sending out despatches for the colonies was very correctly described by the late lamented Mr. Charles Buller, who said, in a work published by him on the subject, that they were written not by the Secretary of State, but by some apocryphal character, who might be termed Mr. Mother Country. So the despatches sent out to Ceylon, though signed, could not be written by Earl Grey, but by this Mr. Mother Country, for the contents of these despatches were contradictory to each other. In some of them Earl Grey expresses a desire to see a system of reform and of retrenchment instituted; and he urges Lord Torrington to reduce the expenses of his government, as one of the causes of the rebellion in Ceylon was the excessive amount of taxes imposed for the purpose of meeting the expenditure. On the other hand, the Colonial Office maintains in the colony a most extravagant expenditure, in the shape of civil list, with a governor at the head of it, receiving a salary of 7,000*l.* a year. The estimated expenditure for the year 1849 was 408,000*l.* How much of that sum was composed of charges especially sanctioned by Earl Grey? No less than 236,000*l.* was positively sanctioned by the noble Earl, who nevertheless recommended so strongly reform and retrenchment. The same course was observed in Guiana. Reform and retrenchment were urged on the authorities at that colony; and yet the sums which the Government at the Colonial Office had approved of as proper to be expended, totally prevented those recommendations from being carried into effect. Let him (Mr. Scott) ask the House whether a sum like that was a fair proportion of the revenue of such a colony to be paid in salaries and civil establishments? The noble Earl at the head of the Colonial Office, however, seemed to consider taxes in the light of so many blessings; and he had addressed several despatches to Lord Torrington on the subject, which rather merited the distinction of being styled didactic effusions than the plain directions of a Colonial Secretary to the governor of a colony. The more direct the tax, the greater the blessing, seemed to be the motto of the noble Earl. In this country, the proper principle upon which taxation was regulated, was property; but Earl Grey seemed to think that an opposite rule ought to prevail at the opposite side of the globe, and that poverty, and not property, was the legitimate basis of taxation. In the despatch addressed by him to Lord Torrington, dated the 24th October, 1848, there occurred the following passages, which would sufficiently illustrate his meaning:—

> "Hence the expediency of adopting the very opposite policy to that which would be proper in Europe, by endeavouring, in the imposition of taxes, to make them press, so far as prudence will admit, rather upon those who are content with a mere subsistence, than upon the possessors of property, and the purchasers of luxuries."

The noble Earl in this moral essay seems to consider that the visits of the tax-gatherer ought to be the more welcome the less able the poor man was to answer his demand. He says in another place—

> "It appears to me to be a mistake to regard the imposition of direct taxation to a moderate amount, upon a population, under such circumstances, as really injurious to them. I am persuaded that it may, on the contrary, be conducive to their true welfare."

Now, unfortunately, the Cingalese do not appear to be such good political economists as to understand the full blessings of direct taxation; and they seem to unite so much base ingratitude to profound ignorance as not to exhibit any thankfulness for the imposition of taxes which they were little able to pay. For example, they did not appreciate the direct blessings of a road-tax, a gun tax, a dog tax, a shop tax, a trading tax, a boat tax, a carriage tax, and last, not least, a rice tax of 25 per cent. He remembered a great statesman hoping to be gratefully remembered in the cottage by the peasant who refreshed his wearied body with untaxed bread. The Minister for the Colonies, his disciple in free trade and abolition of corn laws, here, thinks a tax on bread in Guiana, and on rice in Ceylon, rather conducive to civilisation and moral improvement than otherwise. Speaking of tropical countries, Earl Grey says—

> "If it be admitted, as I think it must, that the real welfare of mankind consists not alone in the enjoying an abundance of the necessaries of life, but in their being also placed in a situation favourable to their moral improvement, and to their advance in civilisation, it follows that in such countries as I have adverted to, it may be for the true interest of the working classes that the contributions demanded from them towards the wants of the State should somewhat increase the amount of exertion required for procuring subsistence."

And that was the method recommended by the noble Earl as the first step towards civilising the Cingalese! Instead of sending out missionaries from Exeter Hall, the best plan, according to the notions of the Colonial Secretary, for converting the natives of Ceylon, would be to despatch thither the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with an army of tax-gatherers. In a despatch of the same date, 24th October, the noble Earl appears very indignant with a body of most respectable merchants, planters, traders, and others for presenting a memorial to him, instead of petitioning the Governor. Certainly it was a very useless attempt on their part, and betrayed great ignorance; but surely it was needless for the applicants to appeal to the very authority against which they sought redress. They appealed to his Lordship because the Legislature had too little, and because the Executive had too much, power; and one of the grievances stated in one of the petitions—

> "That the constitution of the councils of this island does not lead your petitioners to hope for any amelioration through their means; the unpaid, unofficial, members, who are the nominees

of the Governor, are powerless to originate any measure, and, judging from the past, your petitioners have no hope in them for the future, as they do not enjoy the confidence of the community."

Thus, in their petition to the home authorities, their first complaint was that they had no confidence in the justice of the legislative council of the colony, and for that reason appealed to higher authorities. And no wonder, when we find the official members ranged on one side, and almost all the unofficial on the other, as follows: Ayes, 9—the Collector of Customs, the Surveyor General, the Government Agent, the Treasurer, the Auditor General, the Queen's Advocate, the Colonial Secretary, the Major General, Mr. Smith. Noes, 5—Mr. Swan, Mr. Fairholme, Mr. Armitage, Mr. Dias, Mr. Giffening. What would be thought here of a majority so constituted? They complain of the excessive taxation, the enormous expenditure, the expensive sinecures, and the pain of uselessly recording votes in a minority against an official majority. Taking the whole of the circumstances which had been brought to light into consideration, he could come to no other conclusion than that the proceedings of Lord Torrington and his legislative council had given an apt illustration of Earl Grey's own description of colonial government—namely, that it was a "bold, irresponsible despotism;" and most certainly this was not the way to attach British subjects resident in a distant colony to the dominion of the mother country.

SIR R. PEEL: As the House has agreed on the main point—namely, an inquiry into the administration of the Government in two or three of our colonies, and as the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for the Colonies (Mr. Hawes) has challenged and invited inquiry into the specific facts contained in the statement of the hon. Member for Inverness-shire (Mr. Baillie), there is no necessity to occupy much of the time of the House. I wish it was possible—as there is a common consent on both sides of the House to an inquiry—so to modify the terms of the reference to the Committee, that there should be no necessity for a division on this Motion. I agree with those hon. Gentlemen who have adverted to the great ability displayed by the hon. Member for Inverness-shire (Mr. Baillie); but I think that it would be a great advantage to the colonies if this inquiry were conducted less with the view of casting blame upon any particular Secretary of State administering the affairs of the colonies, than of ascertaining whether there could not be such a modification of the system of colonial administration as might be calculated to give satisfaction and content to the inhabitants. When we look to the state of Demerara, to the state of Ceylon, and to the state of Mauritius, and find proofs of discontent existing in those colonies, the chief object of consideration is the removal of the causes of just dissatisfaction. Such an inquiry into the general condition of Ireland was proposed by Lord Althorp, and was carried on for three Sessions. I did not consider that the Motion of Lord Althorp was a censure on the party in power, but an inquiry into the grounds of complaint and principles of government which should be adopted. The Motion thus was made by Lord Althorp was at once assented to by the House. I would enter into such inquiry without reference to the conduct of any one particular Secretary of State, but in reference to the general system of colonial administration. If it be intended to institute an inquiry into the commercial condition of these colonies, with the view of reviving protection, of encouraging hopes, and unsettling the minds of the colonists, I, for one, cannot consent to it. I think it would be a great public evil to delude the minds of the colonists with the expectation that this House would consent to the revival of that system of commercial policy which it has so recently condemned and abandoned. But, Sir, I think it would be quite possible to effect the object which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Baillie) professes to have in view, so as at the same time to avoid any misconception upon the subject. I think that we might effect the object I allude to by removing such misunderstanding, by altering the original Motion, and dispensing with the necessity for the Amendment. I may be thought fastidious, but I do not like the wording, either of the original Motion or the Amendment. The Motion seems, perhaps without intending it, to encourage the hope of revived protection—the Amendment declares a fixed resolution as to the future, which I see no necessity for putting on record. It is impossible to discuss this subject without making some reference to the papers which have been laid on the table of the House. In those papers I find ample ground for the Motion before the House. I say nothing anticipatory of the inquiry, but there are official documents presented to Parliament by the Minister of the Crown, and it is difficult to conceal the impression made by the evidence before us. I regret the general tone and spirit in which these despatches are written. No man can be more disposed than I am to make allowance for a governor called upon to administer the affairs of a colony under circumstances of great difficulty. There has been a rebellion, and this rebellion has been suppressed. If there had been inactivity and delay on the part of the Government, that rebellion might have assumed a formidable character, and we should then have blamed the want of vigour and timely severity. I make, therefore great allowances for the governor of a distant colony under such circumstances. I do not quarrel with Lord Torrington for the proclamation of martial law, or with having shown a determination to prevent and suppress the outbreak by decisive measures; but it would have been perfectly consistent with vigorous action, to have abstained from some of the acts done, and spoken of them when done in a different tone and temper. I will take the case of Lord Torrington, as it was stated by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hawes). I will take it for granted that the issue of the taxing ordinances had nothing to do with the rebellion. I will admit that the causes of rebellion were not sudden or accidental; but the more strongly I make that admission the greater alarm do I feel with respect to the condition of Ceylon, and the more do I deprecate the course which has been followed. I will take the case as it is shown in these despatches. Lord Torrington says—

> "I repudiate all supposed connexion between the taxation and the rebellion."

I give him all the benefit of this. Taxation, then, was not the cause of the rebellion. It arose from a deeper rooted feeling than mere dissatisfaction with new imposts. The cause of the rebellion is explained in the following extract from a despatch of Lord Torrington:—

> "The chiefs and priests, always treacherous to the Government, and hostile to British rule, above all, indignant at the course pursued towards them respecting their religion, have been looking eagerly forward for some pretence to fly to arms, and a plot of longer preparation, and of deeper or more determined character, has seldom, if ever, burst forth. I repudiate all supposed connexion between the taxation and the rebellion, in which opinion the observations of the Colonial Secretary, Sir J. E. Tennent, while travelling through the country, further confirm me."

If this be the cause of the rebellion it justifies great apprehension as to the future tenure of our power in the colony; of course I do not mean mere possession by military occupation, but of possession, accompanied by contentment and satisfaction on the part of the people. It appears that two great classes, independent of the ignorant masses, were discontented—the priests and the chiefs. The priests, according to another despatch of the Governor, belongs to an apathetic religion, not manifesting opposition to the religious tenets of others—not hostile to the Established Church—but intensely attached to their own rights and to their national customs. Such was the feeling of the priests. With respect to that of the chiefs, Lord Torrington says—and I think with great force—

> "I cannot forget the observation made to me by one of the chiefs at a solemn conference, held at Kandy last year, who said, 'If you Britons give nothing towards the support of our religion, and if you have no regard to our national customs, what benefit is the British Government to us?'"

This was the address of a native chief to the British Governor. He said nothing of commercial advantage from connexion with us, nothing of the privileges enjoyed in being subject to British rule, but he said there are two national things dear to us—our religion and our customs; if you discourage the one, and have no respect for the other, of what use is your rule to us? The Governor observes, that this speech had made a deep impression on his mind. I wish it had been of a more lasting character, and that the observation of the native chief had recurred to the mind of Lord Torrington when he had to decide on the treatment of priests and chiefs? I do not complain of extending to them the same measure of punishment as to others; but if any slight to their religion was regarded with great jealousy by the priests, if contempt for their customs was looked upon with great jealousy by the people—how could Lord Torrington reconcile it with wisdom, or even common sense, to shoot a priest in the robes of his order; or, when he inflicted transportation on a chief, first to subject him to the ignominy of corporal punishment? I could not discuss this question without alluding to these passages in the despatches. If this priest administered treasonable oaths in favour of the pretended king, and if the pretended king was guilty of rebellion, the necessity for extreme severity might be urgent. It might be imperatively necessary to inflict the punishment of death upon a priest; but what can be the necessity for shooting a priest when in his sacerdotal robes? How would the public have treated such a circumstance had it occurred in this country? Suppose, for instance, the case of a priest engaged in the rebellion of Tipperary. He might have been tried and sentenced to death—he might have been executed, and a feeling of pity or regret might alone have been excited; but if the punishment had been inflicted in a way to cast a slur upon the order of which he was a member—if the priest had been ostentatiously brought forth for execution on the gallows dressed in his priest's robes, the feeling of simple regret would have been changed to one of indignation and disgust on the part of millions. And this feeling of indignation will not be the weaker among an ignorant people, because their religion is debased by superstitious errors, and partakes not of the mild and tolerant spirit of Christianity. Now with regard to the pretended king, Lord Torrington says—

> "After carefully weighing the recommendation of the judge for mercy, I have arrived at the conclusion that, under the circumstances stated, it would be expedient not to carry the sentence of death into execution. The dread of transportation among the natives is almost greater than that of death."

I can believe this. I know that the feeling thus described by the Governor exists in some parts of Ireland. The fear of separation from their homes and families is almost regarded as equal to the punishment of death. But when in public estimation the punishment of transportation is regarded as greater than that of death, what can be said of the proceeding thus described by Lord Torrington?—

> "It is my intention that the sentence shall be commuted to transportation for life; and, by way of making a more lasting impression upon the minds of the Kandians, I propose that their pretended king shall receive a severe public flogging at Kandy preparatory to his transportation."

The priest is shot in his full canonicals, and the king, by way of preparation for transportation, is subjected to a severe public flogging. Now, making every allowance for the position of Lord Torrington, thinking it highly probable that he was placed in circumstances of extreme difficulty, admitting that we are indebted to him for his manifestation of vigour and resolution, I think it would have been perfectly possible to reconcile acts of vigour and authority with abstinence from other acts, calculated to alienate from us the minds of the whole population—a population already too prone to regard our dominion with dissatisfaction and jealousy. Sir, I could not possibly have given expression to my opinions with regard to the particular Motion before the House, without expressing the pain and regret with which I have read those portions of Lord Torrington's despatches to which I have referred.

Mr. HORSMAN wished, although the Government consented to the inquiry, to make one or two observations. He thought that, in referring to the executions, which all must lament, justice ought to be done to Sir Archibald Oliphant, the Chief Justice of Ceylon. To him a debt of gratitude was owing, for having interposed to save a further effusion of blood, which might have been lamentably and disgracefully shed. The few lines in which he stated that the executions which had already taken place were sufficiently extensive, and that others ought to be avoided, were so creditable to his character, that they deserved to be acknowledged; and, indeed, whenever such instances of conduct on the part of public servants abroad came under the notice of the Government at home, or of Parliament, no opportunity ought to be lost of recognising them in the most prompt, just, and generous manner. He thought it only right to make this expression of his feeling towards the conduct of a gentleman of whom he knew nothing, except from the despatches before the House. Had the inquiry been resisted, he should have voted for it; but as the Government, in granting it, had taken a line that was creditable to them, he had nothing more to say, except to congratulate the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Baillie) upon the manner in which he had introduced the Motion.

Lord J. RUSSELL: Although, after the able speech of my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, I do not feel that the conduct of Earl Grey requires any further defence, yet, in agreeing to the appointment of the Committee, I think it necessary not to pass wholly without notice, both some of the observations which the hon. Gentleman who brought forward the Motion (Mr. Baillie) has made, and some remarks which have been made by others with regard to the affairs of Ceylon. With regard to the hon. Gentleman who brought forward the Motion, and who did it with such a degree of personal bitterness, as I have seldom heard— ["No, no!"] I must say, I believe that must have been the case, in order to lead him to suppress, so completely as he did, any facts which might be favourable to the administration of the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and of the Governor of Ceylon. For the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Baillie) began his speech with regard to Ceylon, by stating that this was a case in which the character of Lord Torrington was involved; that when Lord Torrington arrived at Ceylon, and he found there was a deficiency in the revenue to meet the expenditure, he thought proper immediately to impose certain direct taxes. Now, Sir, the fact is, as the hon. Gentleman must have learned from the papers before the House, and as my hon. Friend (Mr. Hawes) has shown to him, there were certain import and export duties in Ceylon before Lord Torrington's arrival, some of which had become so unproductive that the revenue was unable to meet the expenditure. More especially among those duties were the export duties upon cinnamon and coffee. There were other duties besides those most unadvisable and impolitic taxes; but more especially were these unfit at the moment at which Lord Torrington assumed the government of Ceylon, because, owing to the reduction in the price of cinnamon, and to the reduction in the price of coffee, they were at once found diminished and unproductive, and far more burdensome than the other revenue taxes. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Baillie) then represented Lord Torrington as a volunteer financier attempting to impose a new system of taxation. So far from that, the fact is, that a former Secretary of State had given directions for the whole subject of taxation to be inquired into. Sir Emerson Tennent, the island Secretary, had suggested a plan for revising the taxes. That plan had been examined by gentlemen deputed for the purpose, and Lord Torrington had only to consider in what manner he should carry this proposition—this one simple proposition—into effect. There is one remarkable circumstance, of which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Baillie) took no notice—namely, that the production of coffee had increased to such an extent that for two years there was necessarily great distress among the planters in the island of Ceylon. I find, there having been no export of coffee in the year 1843, the export in 1845 was upwards of 16,000,000 lbs., and that in 1848 it had increased to 30,000,000 lbs. — and this export of 30,000,000 lbs., be it observed, when the whole consumption of this country is not more than 37,000,000 lbs. It was obvious, that when the coffee planters of Ceylon had to send 30,000,000 lbs. into a market where they were to meet the competition of West India and foreign coffee, there must necessarily be some great reduction in prices, and consequently considerable distress among the planters. Was it not wise, then, to diminish the burdens which affected the planters injuriously, and which tended to prevent industry and the cultivation of that which had become a most important article of growth and export? But the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Baillie) most studiously and carefully avoided that subject. He took care to suppress and conceal every fact that would lead the House to suppose that anything of the kind had taken place; and he represents Lord Torrington as having volunteered the system of direct taxation. But the hon. Gentleman, in reading the despatch relative to the gun tax, read part only; he read it without the paragraph immediately preceding that which he did read, in which it is said that Sir Colin Campbell, the previous Governor, had proposed the ordinances imposing the gun tax, that he had been an advocate with the Council of Policy for that tax, and that Lord Torrington, concurring in the views Sir Colin Campbell had taken, was prepared to carry them into effect. But that would not have suited the hon. Gentleman's purpose. It would have shown the House that Lord Torrington was not the author of the objectionable ordinance, and that he had not created the rebellion by imposing the tax. The hon. Gentleman, therefore, took the utmost care not to read one word of that passage. And then, after having shown other and similar instances of carelessness and want of candour, the hon. Gentleman concluded his speech by bringing a most unusual charge against Earl Grey, of having made a speech in the House of Lords, in which he had not given a fair account of certain memorials. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Baillie) having indulged in this sort of misconstruction, having suppressed the truth in almost every instance, at last ended, I say, with a charge against Earl Grey, with reference to a speech which he made in the House of Lords, of which we can none of us have any accurate knowledge — [" Oh !"] — of which, I repeat again, none of us can have any accurate knowledge; and of which, you, Sir, if you had been aware the hon. Gentleman was quoting from a speech delivered in the House of Lords, would have been obliged to notice as disorderly! That speech, I believe, was totally different from that which the hon. Gentleman says it was. The hon. Gentleman says, it was a speech to show that prosperity existed in the island of Jamaica. I believe it was no such thing. I believe it was a speech intended to show that property had changed hands in the island, and that many persons —men of small capital—intended to take land in small holdings, in Jamaica, and not to show the prosperity of the planters. At all events, I submit it to the hon. Gentleman, that while he is not capable of giving a fair account of Earl Grey's despatches, and Lord Torrington's despatches in answer to them, he should not have founded a charge in this House, upon the report of a speech in the House of Lords, with regard to which the Members of this House may differ as to the meaning and sense. I come now to a more painful part of the subject, namely, the insurrection which took place in the island of Ceylon. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Baillie) has described that insurrection as entirely owing to the tax ordinances; as being the result of plans long concealed; of a desire for independence of British rule; of feelings of resentment at the want of attention shown to the priests and the head men. I am inclined to believe, however, although the tax ordinances may have been the immediate occasion of the insurrection that took place, that the account given by Lord Torrington, corroborated as it is by various other parties, is the true account with regard to the origin of the insurrection. I am confirmed in that belief by seeing that Ceylon has not been, as the hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume) described it, as from the year 1811, entirely peaceable. In the year 1818, thirty years ago, there took place an insurrection founded upon similar motives, founded upon a wish to obtain the independence of the Kandians, founded upon a desire to restore their religion in all the splendour which the followers of Buddha ever rejoiced in. In that insurrection, which lasted more than a year, besides the lives of many people being lost in conflict and in battle, no less than twenty-eight were sentenced to be shot; they were shot to death; and martial law continued, not only during the rebellion, but for two whole years afterwards. With regard to this subject, therefore, I must say that I think we are indebted to Lord Torrington for the energy he showed at the commencement of the insurrection. Had he not shown great energy at that time, the insurrection might have lasted twelve months, and have been attended with the loss of more lives of British soldiers, and many more of natives. It was, however, quickly suppressed, and the country as quickly restored to confidence and quiet. We had an account of a small British detachment marching, with 20,000 people upon the watch to intercept and surround them; we had accounts of the people meeting in vast numbers for the purpose of proclaiming a king, and to rise in insurrection. All these attempts were quickly suppressed and put down; and I think that Lord Torrington deserves credit for it. Without referring to any opinion that Earl Grey may entertain of the conduct of Lord Torrington, I will read to the House the opinion of Sir Herbert Maddock, a name carrying with it that authority which belongs to a man long conversant with the affairs of India. He is a gentleman holding a high position among the public servants in India, and he is entirely impartial in the opinion he gives:—

> " I fully and most cordially concur with you in expressing my high appreciation of the able and well-arranged plans of the Government in Colombo, of the prompt and efficient distribution of its military resources in such a manner that, with the exception of those districts where the insurgents, appearing unexpectedly, and in great force, were enabled to overrun the country, and spreading havoc and destruction in their path —before the military could reach them—has preserved the lives and properties of the European settlers, and all other loyal and peaceful subjects in all other parts of the province; and I unhesitatingly state my belief that you are directly indebted to the able person at the head of the Government for the security and comparative tranquillity which now everywhere prevail."

So far from giving the character to Lord Torrington which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Baillie) has been pleased to give him (probably without any knowledge of his character or abilities), and not taking the line of the hon. Baronet the Member for the borough of Southwark (Sir W. Molesworth) who attacks all colonial governors in a lump, and calls them " privileged incapables," Sir Herbert Maddock tells a public meeting that they owe the tranquillity of the country and the safety of their lives to the head of the government of Ceylon. I find, likewise, that at more than one public meeting the same expressions were used; that it was owing to the energy of the Governor that the insurrection was so speedily suppressed. I say, therefore, that Lord Torrington does deserve credit and thanks for the ability, the energy, and the resolution which he has exhibited. Now, Sir, one word with regard to the punishments afterwards inflicted. I confess, I feel upon that subject, that I am not a competent judge of the extent of punishment which was necessary in order to preserve the lives and property, as well of British settlers, as of all other subjects of Her Majesty at Ceylon. It certainly would appear to me, on considering the correspondence between the Chief Justice and Lord Torrington, that the Chief Justice took a more able, and I should say a more politic view of what was prudent at the time he wrote that letter to Lord Torrington. But Lord Torrington observed that recommendation; and, in fact, the prisoners were transported. With regard to the conduct of the courts-martial, I know not if there is any room for complaint. They were presided over by Colonel Drought, an officer of established reputation. It does not appear that they were guilty of cruelty, or that they gave way to any excess of severity merely for any gratification they might have had in it. I presume that Colonel Drought thought it necessary to inflict these punishments; and with regard to Lord Torrington's part in the case, it consists only in his expressing his general satisfaction with the conduct of Colonel Drought—a satisfaction which I must say, is shared likewise by many of the inhabitants of Ceylon. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth (Sir R. Peel) has spoken of two particular facts—the execution of a priest in his sacred vestments, and the administration of corporal punishment upon a prince. Upon these two particular facts I must decline to give any opinion whatever. I confess that with regard to facts of this kind, so far as they are here stated, I do not see that there was sufficient reason for such inflictions. But, at the same time, I am far from thinking it impossible that there might be peculiar circumstances in the state of mind of the people, after an insurrection had just been suppressed, which rendered these acts justifiable on the part of those who inflicted them. But I go on to the other matters in which the Governor of Ceylon has been impugned. It is said, that he has shown a disregard for the religion of the Kandians. I must say, having been myself in the situation of Colonial Secretary, that, although it seems very easy to say, "Pay every respect to the religion of the natives; take care no kind of contempt is shown to it; that every regard is paid to their rites;" although that is very easy to say, yet no Governor is exactly in the situation to preserve the line which will satisfy all. I recollect having written despatches to the Governor of Ceylon, in which I endeavoured, as well as I could, to point out to him the line which I thought should be followed. But this, I am convinced, is the danger to which a governor is continually exposed. If he appears in any way to neglect the religious rites of the country, or if, in consequence of having, by his position as governor of the island, the temple and the temple lands in his hands, he does not apply their proceeds to the rites of the followers of Bramah, he then offends the religious feelings of the natives, and he runs the risk of exciting great discontent. But if, upon the other hand, he confers upon those rites, and temples, and priests, all the respect which the former native governments had shown, then we find that in this country, and finally in this House, there is roused an accusation that idolatry is respected; that the British Government show their contempt for Christianity, by the deference and forbearance with which the most superstitious and disgusting rites are treated; and we are asked, in public meetings throughout the country, and in speeches in this House, to condemn such conduct on the part of governors and ministers who are appointed by a Christian Queen. Let me tell the House, therefore, that between these opposite dangers the line is by no means so safe, so definite, and so easy, as those who, in a speech, lay down lines of conduct for governors to pursue, might seem to suppose. With regard to Lord Torrington especially, I believe that with respect to this subject he has received instructions, some given by former Secretaries of State for the Colonies, some given by the present Secretary of State, which have tended much to fetter and control his conduct with regard to these temples. It may be, that among other matters, this will come before the Committee; but I trust that in investigating the subject, they will show that forbearance which I say ought to be shown; and that they will consider that the person administering government either in India or in any of our eastern colonies has to decide between two paths, both of which are beset with difficulties, and that it requires the utmost temper and discretion to choose the line which is prudent, and therefore right. And I believe it has happened to Lord Torrington, in the general discontent which prevailed amongst the population of Ceylon, to have fallen to him the result of a conduct long pursued, in accordance with which the British Government has thought it necessary to declare that it was not right for any British governor to favour the superstitious rites of the natives. Sir, having thus spoken of the affairs of Ceylon, I certainly shall not say much with respect to the affairs of the other colonies to which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Baillie) alluded. As far as I remember the circumstance, I said I was quite ready to agree to an emigration plan, but that I did not think it right there should be a loan for that purpose. I thought that the full expense of emigration ought to be charged to the colonies. I believe, however, that Lord Stanley afterwards consented to an ordinance, by which a loan was decreed. But, Sir, I cannot agree with the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Baillie), that Mr. Barkly has at all forfeited his title to the respect of this House by accepting the government of British Guiana. On the contrary, I think he gave an example, which a man does well to set, that without reference to former party differences, he was ready to go to a colony where his influence might be of use in reconciling the opinions of the inhabitants to the mode of government in which they were bound to acquiesce. And, be it observed, whilst the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Baillie) finds fault with Mr. Barkly for accepting the government of Guiana, he is one of those who are constantly blaming the Government, because they choose none but their own partisans for offices of this kind. He says, in the first place, "Here is a Government which chooses none but its partisans to whom to give offices of importance." And in the next place, "If any person, not belonging to their party, takes office under them, I will take care to hold up his conduct to the reprobation of the House of Commons." I have here a list, with which I need not long trouble the House, of the appointments made by Earl Grey. I think his appointments of governors show a very careful desire to select men of ability for those important trusts. I know myself how difficult it is very often to find a person well qualified for the post, who will consent to leave this country for a distant colony. I believe, in the very case of Ceylon, the government was offered to at least three persons—[An Hon. MEMBER: Four]—four, as I am reminded, before it was proposed to Lord Torrington. I know, with regard to several other governments, that they have been offered to men whom it was thought desirable, on account of their abilities, to place in those exalted posts, but that in several instances that hope was disappointed, and the office refused. So untrue is it that those appointments are always sought as objects of desire, and so untrue is it that this patronage is any great object of desire with the person who may fill the office of Colonial Secretary; on the contrary, it is very often a matter of the utmost difficulty to find officers well qualified for filling the posts that may happen to fall vacant. I will read some of the names of persons appointed by Earl Grey. To Canada, the Earl of Elgin; to New Brunswick, Sir Edmund Walker Head; to Van Diemen's Land, Sir William Denison; to Barbadoes, Colonel Reid, who has been succeeded by Sir William Colebrooke; to Gibraltar, Sir Robert Gardiner, an officer of artillery; to Malta, Mr. More O'Ferrall; to Mauritius, Sir William Gomm; to Labuan, Sir James Brooke; to Hong Kong, Mr. Bonham; to South Australia, Sir Henry Young. Such is the general nature of the appointments which Earl Grey has made to colonial governments. I think they show, generally, a very great desire to obtain men of high ability, unconnected with the Government, to fill posts of great importance. Much as I value, in relation to our English colonies, that rule of self-government which for Englishmen is the best rule, I believe that for many of our colonies it is of still more importance to make a good selection of governors. I believe that a governor, well-chosen, does generally so far conciliate the good opinion of those with whom he is to act, that he is enabled to carry many measures which might otherwise be thwarted, and might fail of their purpose. Now, Sir, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Baillie) has made this—which might have been a Motion for inquiry into most important topics, and which may still have a most beneficial effect—he has chosen to make it the occasion, and hardly anything else but the occasion, of an attack—a bitter personal attack—against two individuals, Earl Grey and Viscount Torrington, for their conduct in the management of those colonies. That will not prevent us from giving our assent to the appointment of a Committee in the very terms that he has asked, but with the addition, or something like the addition, proposed by my hon. Friend who sits behind me (Mr. Ricardo); because I think, after the experience of last year—after the long inquiry that took place with respect to sugar and coffee duties in the Committee of last year—it would be a great misfortune if it were understood that this House had appointed a Committee with the view of reimposing protective duties. That the colonies will think so, I cannot but believe. I cannot but believe that if the Committee be appointed solely in the words of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Baillie), there will be the opinion that by bringing witnesses before the Committee they can shake the opinion of the Committee, and finally of this House, as to the system of commercial policy that has been adopted. Like the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth (Sir R. Peel), I see, both in the original Motion and in the Amendment, terms that may well be objected to; but they are not supposed to be intended any more to commit the House than to say that the House does not mean by appointing this Committee to alter its policy. I think some such words are necessary for that purpose. If the House should agree to such terms, I shall be well content to appoint the Committee, with the addition of the words proposed by my hon. Friend the Member for Stoke-upon-Trent.

Mr. DISRAELI: I wish to trouble the House for a few moments before the division takes place—if one is to be called upon the Motion of my hon. Friend (Mr. Baillie), that they may clearly understand the position in which my hon. Friend the Member for Inverness-shire is placed by the observations just made by the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell), and by the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, who preceded him. The Motion before the House is for a Select Committee. I beg the attention of the House to it, because the language of the Motion seems to have led to singular misconceptions. It was—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the grievances complained of in the Crown Colonies of Ceylon and British Guiana, and to report to the House whether any Measures can be adopted for the better administration and government of those dependencies."

Now, Sir, it was certainly the wish of my hon. Friend to have induced the House to consent to a Committee to inquire into the administration and government of those dependencies. Nothing was further from my hon. Friend's thoughts than that that inquiry should at all touch upon any commercial relations, or any fiscal relations, connected with commerce; and I think that any Gentleman who heard the address of my hon. Friend must have felt that such an intention was quite foreign to him at the moment. But, after notice was given of this Motion, there appeared on the Paper an Amendment which I confess surprised me—surprised, I believe, many Gentlemen, but surprised more than all my hon. Friend. The hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent (Mr. Ricardo) moves that after the word "dependencies" there should be added to the original Motion—

> "Whereby they may be rendered more capable of meeting the difficulties of the transition from a system of protection to that competition in the British market with the products of foreign States to which Parliament has determined that they should be exposed, in accordance with the general commercial policy which it has deliberately adopted."

When my hon. Friend the Member for Inverness-shire found that Amendment placed upon the table, I know that he felt considerably embarrassed. He had no idea that what is called a free-trade debate was to be brought under our consideration; he thought he had guarded against this by the language used, "administration and government of the dependencies," whose condition he was going to bring under our consideration to-night. But in consequence of this Amendment, my hon. Friend to-night, in the most scrupulous manner, avoided touching upon any topic that might be misrepresented by any ingenuity of any free-trader; and this is the reasen why he particularly avoided touching upon the circumstance of Lord Torrington reducing the import duties and introducing direct taxation, lest in consequence of this notice of amendment it might immediately be said, "This is merely a sinister attack upon our new commercial system." And yet, because he has thought fit to avoid this rock, he is accused of suppression of facts, because he threw out of his case that which would rather have given it a richness of colouring, lest it might have been misunderstood, and have given some plea to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent (Mr. Ricardo). He is accused of personal bitterness, because he wishes to keep the House to the consideration of the subject. He is accused of suppression of facts. Why, it is perfectly obvious, from the tone of the hon. Gentleman's speech, that if my hon. Friend had commenced by informing the House that the first thing Lord Torrington did was to destroy the revenue that had been created by import duties, and introduce a system of direct taxation, the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent might have had some sort of *locus standi* for interfering; but instead of that, my hon. Friend the Member for Inverness-shire, with laudable discretion, confined himself to the sheer merits of the case; and when the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent rose, he found himself in that position which, in strategy, is called making a diversion, except that in this case I believe it is pretty generally felt that the diversion was not diverting. Well, Sir, what is the conduct of the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for the Colonies (Mr. Hawes), under these circumstances? He comes forward in a tone of impetuous eloquence, carrying everything before him, but at the same time saying, "Don't think I am annoyed; you shall have your Committee—I agree at once—what we want is an inquiry—you shall have an inquiry." A great many Gentlemen left the House—it being a critical hour—under the impression that no division could possibly take place, the Government having assented to the inquiry; and we, being satisfied that an opportunity was obtained of examining into the administration and government of those Crown colonies. Later in the evening, as the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hawes) in his speech waxed warmer and warmer, he said, "You shall have an inquiry; that is to say"—and he turned round to his Colleagues for instructions, in order to ascertain whether he (Mr. Hawes) should grant what he had promised twenty minutes before. Then it was discovered that it was not quite so certain that we were to have the inquiry promised us a little before; the inquiry indeed was again promised, but with a tack—on condition that you accept the Amendment. Really, I think that for the hon. Under Secretary, who has, without any circumlocution, accused my hon. Friend (Mr. Baillie) of having handled this subject to-night in a manner singularly disingenuous and unfair, it was conduct neither fair nor ingenuous on his part to promise a Committee of Inquiry at once, and afterwards to clog his promise with a condition which he knew we could not accept—which it is not to the credit of this House that it should accept. I can only account for this by the excitement of the Treasury bench; because the Under Secretary for the Colonies has told us that whilst he was ready to consent to the Committee, he was himself decidedly of opinion that the inquiry would not be useful or beneficial; whilst the Prime Minister afterwards told us that he thought it was a subject very fit for inquiry. And we have authorities of very great importance in this House who are of the same opinion. Now, my hon. Friend has been sharply attacked by the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell), as well as by the Under Secretary of State, on account of the personal bitterness with which he spoke both of Lord Torrington and of Earl Grey. Certainly, my hon. Friend asserted that he was not aware of any public claims which Lord Torrington had to an office of such great importance and trust—language certainly not peculiarly offensive; nay, he even mentioned Lord Torrington as being hitherto only known to fame as having filled the office of a Lord in Waiting, an observation, I believe, not unparliamentary. We listened to the attack, which has been called a bitter, a malignant attack, upon Lord Torrington; and we have also listened to the defence of Lord Torrington by the Under Secretary for the Colonies; and, so far as I can form an opinion, I should imagine that when Lord Torrington hears both of the attack and the defence, he will be less alarmed by the attack than the defence. The agricultural eulogium passed on Lord Torrington may be pleasant and agreeable to his feelings; but the official announcement that the noble Lord was a director of a railway company—of the South Eastern Railway Company—and that he received a public testimonial from that company—to speak of these as being qualifications for the governor of one of our most important colonies, might startle, were they not brought forward by the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, whose public services have also, I believe, been recognised by the South Eastern Railway Company at a public dinner, where I believe he also was presented with a public testimonial. [Mr. HAWES intimated that this was not the case.] I thought that the services which the hon. Gentleman had rendered that company on a remarkable Committee, had been marked by the offer of a public testimonial, which probably the purity of his feelings induced him to decline. However, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hawes) was certainly present at the dinner given to Lord Torrington; and the inspiration of the scene, the genius of the place, I have no doubt, suggested these remembrances on the part of the hon. Gentleman. With regard to the bitter attack on Earl Grey, it is very easy to use these words; but I, remembering what fell from my hon. Friend (Mr. Baillie), must say that I heard nothing to justify that assertion. Certainly the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) is mistaken in supposing that the hon. Member for Inverness-shire censured him as a Minister who invariably employed his own friends and the members of his family. The noble Lord must have been haunted by the journals of the morning, and must have imputed and transferred their observations to the speech of my hon. Friend, who said nothing of the kind. Then my hon. Friend has been sharply rated because he referred to something that occurred in another place; and the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) seems to think that you, Mr. Speaker, ought to have interfered and stopped his observations. But my hon. Friend (Mr. Baillie) used no disorderly expressions—he referred to no speech—he referred only to a public document, which I have myself before now read in this House; and I can assure the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell), though I have not the slightest desire to revive bygone topics, that he is in error in his remembrance of it. It was a public document quoted by the Minister to convey the impression, or rather the statement, that a large capital had been recently invested in the island of Jamaica in the manufacture of sugar, while, in a subsequent paragraph of that memorial, which was not read, it was stated that the persons connected with that investment were already in a state of insolvency. If the House recollects that occurrence, it will account for and justify all the observations that were made. Well, now, in brief—for after all that has been said, and ably said, by so many Members, I cannot presume to keep the House longer —I must vindicate the language of the Motion of my hon. Friend (Mr. Baillie). It seems to me to be framed in good English, in straightforward language, conveying in Parliamentary phrase the intentions of the Mover; and I cannot account for the perversion of mind, the hallucination, by which the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent (Mr. Ricardo) has arrived at the version which he has placed upon it. We shall vote against his Amendment, because we want to obtain our object, which is an inquiry into the government and administration of these colonies and dependencies; and we shall vote against it for a second reason, because we wish to maintain the character of the House of Commons for straightforward dealing and for common sense, and because we will not let it go forth to the public that we are to be diverted from our duty by a manœuvre—a manœuvre which has not even the merit of dexterity. Before us we have the case of a rebellion in one of our most important colonies—a rebellion suppressed by violent means—by the public execution of several subjects of Her Majesty—by the institution of courts-martial. We have these facts before us, and I want to know what could more authorise an inquiry than such circumstances as these, especially when we have high authorities in this House rising in their places and alleging different causes for the rebellion which has occurred? The one tells us that it is a case of financial reform: the other, that it had a long suppressed and deep-seated political cause. If there are these different opinions, that is the best reason why the House of Commons should investigate the subject. I shall only quote a few lines from one of these documents—not from that volume of documents connected with Ceylon which I perceive is in every hon. Gentleman's hands; it is from a volume of the blue books of the colonies, and is from a despatch of Lord Torrington. I think it is of the greatest importance—if the bad administration and misgovernment of Ceylon is at all occasioned by its financial state—I think it is of the greatest importance that we should clearly understand the opinions of the Governor on the subject of retrenchment. Well, in the despatch I find this passage, which, as it is very interesting, the House will, perhaps, allow me to read. After a long despatch, in which he states his views of the colony in detail, the Governor writes—

> "Paradoxical as it may appear, I am constrained to say, that I anticipate greater difficulties from contracting and reducing expenditure, than from providing subjects for the account of re-

venue. There are many sources from which the latter might legitimately be derived, that appear to me to be wholly untouched, and there are others which are now in use that are capable of being extended in a judicious manner. But when establishments are once formed and expenditure is once settled, I find the greatest difficulty in reducing and contracting them. The duties which are at first appointed in cases of emergency, become gradually and imperceptibly fused with the ordinary establishments."

These are the views of the Governor in the June previous to the rebellion. These are Lord Torrington's matured opinions with respect to financial reform—the increase of taxation for the maintenance of the government, not the retrenchment of expenditure. If, then, the increase of expenditure has produced the rebellion, we have no reason to believe that the country has been properly governed, or that he is a governor equal to the occasion. If, on the contrary, the cause lies deeper, I know no better subject for the investigation of the House of Commons than the detection of the real motive. I will not touch at this hour of the night upon the subject of the other colony, except to say that it is a colony which is suffering, and which cries out for retrenchment, and that the Government at home quarrels with it because it cries out for retrenchment. If these are not subjects, under present circumstances, worthy the consideration of the House of Commons, I know not what are, and I cannot suppose, therefore, that any Member will, for one moment, support the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent in the Amendment which he has brought forward. As to the warning of the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell), that unless very precise instructions are given to this Committee, it may last as long as the Committee on Coffee and Sugar Plantations last Session, I cannot agree with the noble Lord that the duration of that Committee is a fit subject for public regret. Whatever may be the system of commercial policy which hon. Gentlemen may approve of, they must approve of the efficient services of a Committee, the result of which was seen in the alteration of the policy of a Minister; and I think the last person who ought to sneer at the services of that Committee, is the Minister who, in consequence of the evidence collected and the report framed by that Committee, was obliged to come forward and announce a change in an almost solemnly-settled question. I repeat there never was a case in which, to my mind, a Committee was more properly moved for than the present. I think the House is indebted to my hon. Friend (Mr. Baillie) for having brought this subject forward, and brought it forward, not with malignant asperity, as has been said, but with remarkable ability. I think also, that the House ought not to hesitate in opposing the Amendment of the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent. In particular I address myself to those Gentlemen who are the sincere supporters of free trade. Be not misled, or prevented from going into the impending investigation, because a phrase has been thrown in your way, and a manœuvre is attempted which—and I think it will not add to the credit of the Minister—is sanctioned by the Government. I call, therefore, upon the House to support the Motion of my hon. Friend (Mr. Baillie), and to oppose in the most decided manner the Amendment of the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent (Mr. Ricardo).

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he would not trespass long upon the attention of the House. He confessed he exceedingly regretted that the House, which was in general agreed as to the propriety of appointing a Committee to consider what improvements could be effected in the administration or government of these two important colonies—Ceylon and Guiana—should dispute as to the terms on which that Motion was to be framed. He agreed with the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth, and with his noble Friend (Lord J. Russell), that exceptions might be taken to the terms both of the Motion of the hon. Member for Inverness-shire, and of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent; and he thought it would not be difficult for the House to find words which would answer the purpose the House had in view—on the one hand, not to send out an impression to these colonies that they were intending in this Committee again to discuss the questions of free trade or protection; or on the other hand, to deprive the colonies of the benefit of this inquiry. He had been looking to the words of the original Motion, and if the hon. Gentleman would accede to one slight alteration, he thought it would remove the difficulty. He proposed, after the words, "to inquire," to omit these words, "into the grievances complained of in the Crown Colonies of Ceylon and British Guiana," and then the Motion would run thus:—

"Select Committee to inquire and report to the House whether any measures can be adopted for the better administration or government of the Crown Colonies of Ceylon and British Guiana."

Let the House consider what would be the effect of the present Motion: what were the grievances alleged with regard to British Guiana. The whole foundation of the alleged grievances of that colony was the effect of the measures of 1846, by which the colonists declared that they could no longer support their establishments nor pay their taxes. Now, if it went out to the colonies that the House of Commons had appointed a Committee to inquire into these grievances, they would understand that we were about again to investigate the principles of the Act of 1846, and thus they would do the greatest mischief to the colony, by leading them to expect an alteration of that policy. The hon. Gentleman disclaimed any intention of having such an object in view; and he therefore thought he had a fair claim upon him, believing him to have made his proposition *bonâ fide*, that he should not insist upon those terms in his Motion to which he (Mr. Labouchere) had objected. There were one or two other observations which he was anxious to make upon that occasion. He should offer one reason, by way of explanation, in consequence of what had fallen from the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth, who, in a tone of which the Government, he was sure, had no right to complain, had objected to some parts of the conduct of Lord Torrington, and had particularly alluded to the fact that the pretender to the throne of Ceylon had, although he was a royal prince, been punished by lashes. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that the pretender was a member of a princely house in Ceylon, and that consequently the Cingalese looked up to him, and must have had their feelings greatly outraged by the indignity to which he had been subjected. But such was not the case. He pretended, indeed, to be a member of a Cingalese royal house; but the Commander-in-Chief, Colonel Drought, denied it, and said he was a low-caste Cingalese; and the right hon. Gentleman would recollect, in 1823, when he himself was a Member of the Cabinet, and when an insurrection took place in Ceylon, there was a pretender set up, who turned out to be not a royal personage at all, but a low-caste Indian. That man received 100 lashes previously to being imprisoned for a length of time. He (Mr. Labouchere) mentioned that, merely to show how difficult it was to deal with things of that kind, when they occurred at such a distance; and that British officers, under such circumstances, had a right to a favourable construction being put upon their conduct, in cases of great difficulty and danger. Another observation which he should make was with regard to an assertion put forward by the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Disraeli). He said, that Lord Torrington had shown no disposition to reduce the expenditure of the colony, and that his only expedient for making the income meet the expenditure was by imposing fresh taxes. In that assertion the hon. Gentleman was altogether incorrect. Lord Torrington had set about most effectually to reduce the expenditure immediately after his arrival. He had effected a reduction of 20,000*l.* in the half-year's expenditure; and out of the fund thereby created he had appropriated 10,000*l.* for the necessary and useful purposes of making roads in the colony. And with regard to the papers presented to the House, he (Mr. Labouchere) did not understand how it was possible for any Gentleman to rise from a careful perusal of them, without being impressed with the conviction that Lord Torrington was possessed of, and had shown, very considerable ability and vigour. One other remark he should make. He thought that the referring of questions to Committees, which seemed to imply any doubt of our intentions with regard to the commercial policy which guided our relations with the colonies, was productive of great evil. It prevented all habits of settled cultivation and trade amongst the colonists. It kept them in a constantly wavering and unsettled condition; and he believed that the adoption of the words he proposed would fully meet the objects of the Gentlemen opposite. He thought it was a great practical evil to unsettle the minds of the colonists, to hold out to them hopes of protection; and he thought it better that the principle should be understood to be fixed, of abandonment of protection for the colonies, as we had abandoned it for ourselves.

Mr. BERNAL OSBORNE said, he did not mean to delay the House at that late hour (then past twelve o'clock); but as a Member on that side of the House, and acting with was called the free-trade party, he should pretest against the attempt then made to introduce the subject of free trade, for the purpose of hoodwinking the House upon that occasion. He did trust that those independent Members of Parliament who would not be led by the bugbear of free trade, would prove on this occasion that they were not to be taken in by that clumsy manœuvre, but would give their votes for an inquiry into the system of colonial government pursued by this country; not implicating by that inquiry either Earl Grey or Lord Torrington, but examining into a system which had now sat for so many years as an incubus upon this country.

Mr. BAILLIE asked if he was to understand that the Amendment was withdrawn? If the Amendment were withdrawn, he would himself propose to make some alterations which might meet the views of the hon. Gentlemen opposite.

Mr. RICARDO thought that really, after all, there was no very great difference between the Gentlemen at both sides of the House. [*Laughter.*] If hon. Gentlemen would only listen he would explain. His object was simply that the Committee should really inquire into the administration of the colonies. He believed that also to be the object of the hon. Gentlemen opposite. There was an expression in the Motion that had led him to believe that the Committee might go into the question of protection to the colonies. If, however, such a resolution could be framed as would exclude the inquiry altogether, he should be perfectly satisfied. But he thought it was only fair that the House should understand what the inquiry really was to be, that there should be no doubt about it.

Mr. WAWN said that the proposer of the Amendment was the mouthpiece of the Government upon that occasion. He should give the Amendment his most decided opposition.

Mr. W. P. WOOD said, it would be wrong to divide the House without there being any difference of opinion. He would suggest that the Motion might be framed so as to meet the views of all parties. The question should be framed to the effect that a Select Committee should be appointed to inquire into the grievances complained of in the administration of the Crown colonies of Ceylon, the Mauritius, and British Guiana, and report to the House whether any amendments might be made in such administration.

The Earl of LINCOLN had no intention of trespassing upon the indulgence of the House at that late hour of the night; but inasmuch as he understood they were about to divide upon the Amendment proposed by the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent, he wished to say a few words. He wished to know what course the hon. Gentleman meant to adopt, for he felt it was impossible for him to give his vote for the Amendment, and it was equally impossible for him, after the interpretation which had been so broadly put upon the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Inverness-shire by the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, and other hon. Gentlemen who had spoken, to allow his vote to be so misinterpreted as that it should be supposed he was in any way sacrificing the principles of free trade. On the contrary, he thought that the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stoke-upon-Trent threw far more doubt upon the object of inquiry, and rendered the question of free trade more likely to be the subject of discussion in the Committee, than if the resolution were put in the form proposed by his hon. Friend (Mr. Baillie). But if the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stoke-upon-Trent withdrew his Amendment, he believed his hon. Friend the Member for Inverness-shire was quite prepared to alter, not indeed the spirit of his Motion, but the words, in such a way as to render it impossible that there could be any misunderstanding as to its real meaning; but if the Amendment proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade were adopted, he thought they should be falling into the very opposite error. The hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for the Colonies had challenged an inquiry, not into the past condition and government of the colony, and its general administration, but into the particular case of Lord Torrington's administration. Now, he (the Earl of Lincoln) was not anxious about Lord Torrington's administration. What he wished was, that they should not confine themselves to the question of amendments for the future, but that they should investigate the grievances of the colonies generally; for he did not think they could provide remedies for the future unless they looked into the circumstances of the past. If the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ricardo) withdrew his Amendment, he (the Earl of Lincoln) was quite sure his hon. Friend the Member for Inverness-shire would make such alterations as would be satisfactory to all parties. But if the hon. Gentleman divided the House, he should be obliged to vote against him.

Lord J. RUSSELL thought that the

hon. Member for Inverness-shire ought to tell the House in what words he proposed to put his resolution, if the Amendment was withdrawn.

Mr. BAILLIE, certainly, never supposed that any Gentleman who understood the English language could put any other construction upon his resolution, than that which had been put upon it by his hon. Friend the Member for Buckinghamshire. If the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent withdrew his Amendment, he (Mr. Baillie) would endeavour to alter his resolution to meet the views of hon. Members, taking care, however, that the alterations did not alter its sense.

Mr. HUME said, whether it were an inquiry by one party or another, they should endeavour to ascertain whether or not there might be a better administration of affairs in the colonies.

Mr. RICARDO, believing the proposal made by the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Baillie) would meet the case, would withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment and original Question, by leave, withdrawn.

Motion made, and Question proposed—

"That a Select Committee be appointed, to inquire into the grievances complained of in the Crown Colonies of Ceylon and British Guiana, in connexion with the Administration and Government of those Dependencies, and to report their opinion whether any measures can be adopted for the redress of any grievances of which there may be shown just reason to complain."

Mr. HUME said, he should object to that. He wanted, not only an inquiry with the view of redressing grievances, but that a better system of administration might be adopted in future. The hon. Member concluded by moving the following Amendment:—

"To add the words 'and also, whether any measures can be adopted for the better Administration and Government of those Dependencies.'"

Question, "That those words be there added," put, and agreed to.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Select Committee appointed.

House adjourned at half-after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, February 21, 1849.

Miutes.] Public Bills.—2° Bribery at Elections; Petty Sessions; Distraining for Rates.

Reported.—Consolidated Fund 8,000,000*l.*; Commons Inclosure.

Petitions Presented. By Mr. Cayley, from a Public Meeting held at Whitby; and by Mr. Cowper, from the Borough of Hertford, for an Alteration of the Law respecting the Church of England Clergy.—By Mr. Osborne, from several Congregations of Protestant Dissenters, for the Abolition of Church Rates, Ecclesiastical Courts, &c.—By Sir W. Somerville, from Drogheda, for a Removal of the Jewish Disabilities.—By Mr. Hume, from Leith, for Reduction in the Public Expenditure.—By Mr. Octavius Duncombe, from the Parish of St. Florence, Pembrokeshire, for Protection to British Produce.—By Mr. Napier, from Members of the Irish Branch of the United Church of England and Ireland, for Encouragement to Schools in Connexion with the Church Education Society (Ireland).—From several Inhabitants of the Counties of Waterford and Cork, for a Repeal of the Fisheries (Ireland) Act.—By Mr. Cowan, from Edinburgh, for a Repeal of the Game Laws.

EAST INDIAN RAILWAYS.

Mr. AGLIONBY moved the Second Reading of the East Indian Railway Company (for making one or more Railways in the East Indies) Incorporation Bill. He thought it right to observe, that he moved the second reading of this Bill with the consent of the Board of Control, under circumstances which he would briefly state to the House. The Bill would be necessary only in the event of the Company's continuing to exercise their functions—a contingency which would altogether depend on the issue, whethor successful or otherwise, of the negotiations now going on with the Executive Government of India. Should the Company continue, the Bill contained provisions by which they would be enabled to regulate and reduce their shares, and for the regulation of some other matters; but if the Company ceased to exist, then, of course, the Bill would be of no use whatever. What he proposed was, that the House should agree to the second reading, and when it went into Committee he would alter or strike out any of the clauses that might be objected to by the Indian Government, or introduce any new provisions, so as to bring it in accordance with their views. The understanding was, that so far as regarded India, the Company would receive a charter; but such was altogether unnecessary in England, where the proper course was to proceed by Bill in Parliament. For the reasons he had now stated, he hoped the House would consent to the second reading, and he was ready, on going into Committee, to make such alterations in the measure as the Indian Government might think necessary.

Sir J. C. HOBHOUSE, under the circumstances mentioned by his hon. Friend, had no intention to object to the second reading of the Bill. He understood from his hon. Friend that what he intended was just this—that if the Bill should proceed at all, he would strike out all those parts that ought to be arranged by charter, and not by Act of Parliament. If the Bill had remained in the state in which it was originally presented to the House, it would most certainly have been his duty to state that it would not be entertained without the consent of the Indian Government, and for this reason, that all the land was vested in the East India Company, and that these railroads could only pass through the Government lands on the supposition that the East India Company were willing to make a grant in their favour. As to the negotiations to which the hon. Gentleman had referred, he could only at present express the hope that the result would be satisfactory to all parties.

Bill read a second time, and committed, and referred to the Committee of Selection.

BRIBERY AT ELECTIONS BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

SIR J. PAKINGTON, in rising to move the Second Reading of this Bill, said, as he had been permitted to bring it in without giving any explanation, he thought it was due to the House, and to the measure itself, that he should make some statement upon the present occasion. He was aware of the difficulty of dealing with the question of bribery at elections; but, after the notorious corruption which had taken place at the general elections of 1841 and 1847, the subject assumed a new degree of most pressing importance. He introduced this measure with great deference to the noble Lord at the head of the Government, whose attention had been specially devoted to the subject, and who had given it the most praiseworthy attention. Few men understood it so well as the noble Lord; and it was with no intention of depreciating or lowering the value of his exertions in the cause, that he (Sir J. Pakington) proposed his present measure. Neither did he mean to undervalue the two Acts upon the subject of which the noble Lord was the author in the years 1841 and 1842. But he should express his decided opinion that the existing laws were altogether insufficient for the prevention of bribery at elections. He did not mean to say that the present laws against bribery were not sufficiently severe; they were stringent enough in their provisions; but what he was about to prove was, that the existing law was, to a great degree, inoperative, for the reason that under it all chance of detection and of punishment of bribery at elections was dependent entirely upon the presentation of election petitions; whereas he was prepared to prove that wherever corruption exists there was a combination of the most powerful motives, which had the effect of deterring, and did deter, persons from presenting petitions to Parliament. That was the argument which he sought to establish. He would not detain the House by adverting, at any length, to the details of existing Acts of Parliament, but he must request permission of the House briefly to call their attention to what were the existing laws against bribery and corruption at elections. From the time that our constitution gradually assumed its present shape, and it became an object of ambition to men of birth and station to acquire seats in the House of Commons, from that time must we date the commencement of that system of corruption of which we had to deplore the enormous increase. The first attempt was made to check bribery at elections towards the end of the reign of Charles II., and during the reign of James II.; but those attempts were vain. At length, in the seventh year of Will. III., the Act was passed which was known as the Treating Act: and it was upon that Act that the present system of Parliamentary constituency was founded. The next Act of importance was the 2nd Geo. II., which was so well known as the Bribery Act. By that Act the bribery oath was provided, which might be put to electors before they were permitted to give their votes. But the principal provision of that Act was the 500*l.* penalty connected with deprivation of seat, and of privilege to be re-elected, imposed upon those who should be convicted of bribery in a court of law. But the Act had become virtually a dead letter. He had intended to have moved for a return of all the convictions obtained, and the prosecutions instituted under that Act. But upon consideration, and after inquiry, he found that the prosecutions were so very few, and the convictions still so more rare, that it was not worth while to move for the returns, and it was evident that, for all practical purposes, the Act was a dead letter. Yet it was to these two Acts, the Treating Act and the Bribery Act, that they had trusted, until, in 1841, the noble Lord at the head of the Government directed his attention to the subject, and brought in the first of the two Acts to which he (Sir J. Pakington) had referred. In that Act, the very important power was given to Parliamentary Committees to receive proofs of acts of bribery before the agency of the parties was approved. It was a most valuable Act; but its defect was, its requiring the previous presentation of a petition. If no petition were presented, there was no possibility of proceeding. The next Act was that passed in 1842. Every Gentleman who listened to him, recollected the compromises of bribery cases which had led to that enactment. Its provisions were chiefly directed against compromises. But the House would recollect that the only practical result of that Act was, so far as compromises were concerned, that it had effected a change in the time at which the compromises were made. The noble Lord said, "After the presentation of the petition, you shall make no compromise." But no legislation could prevent parties from effecting compromises before any petition was presented. Another portion of the Act would also, he (Sir J. Pakington) feared, tend to render it inoperative, namely, the power given in certain cases to the electors themselves to present petitions to the House where bribery prevailed. For the manner in which the power was hampered with the necessity for the petitioners entering into recognisances to the amount of 1,000*l.* in the first instance, and the discretion given to Committees to make the petitioners liable to costs, should the case not be borne out, would render the Act entirely inoperative. These two Acts, then, could not come into operation until after petitions should have been presented to Parliament. There was a Bill upon the subject at present pending in another place. He held a copy of it in his hand; but he knew it would be irregular and unfair, until it should be properly before Parliament, to enter into any discussion upon its provisions. He might, however, say thus much, that its principle was much the same as that of the Bill that was brought before Parliament last Session—namely, the detection and punishment of bribery, by a Commission to be sent down to the towns where the bribery was alleged to have been committed. Now, the same objection which he had already made to the measures of the noble Lord, applied to that; for not only should they have a Commission appointed, but they should first have a petition presented to Parliament, before the provision of the Act could come into operation. He should inform the House that he was prepared to offer them something more than mere opinions upon the subject; but he should be obliged to throw himself on the indulgence of the House to place in him a certain degree of confidence. He had had the particulars of some contests that had taken place during the last general election of 1847, placed at his disposal, with the view of promoting the Bill which he was then moving—but of course under certain conditions—with the promise from him, that he would neither mention the places implicated, nor disclose the names of the parties concerned. He, therefore, begged the House to accept his honourable assurance that he would not state any facts which he was not able to prove, and of which he had not complete knowledge. Again asking them to place confidence in his statements, he should call the first borough to which he should allude, "Borough A." In that borough there were between 1,000 and 2,000 electors. [An hon. Member here suggested "Aylesbury."] It was not the borough to which his hon. Friend referred. He merely called it "A" for the convenience of reference. But he was in a condition to state that nearly all the electors in it were accessible to bribery. The exceptions consisted of the banker, the clergyman, some lawyers, and a few respectable tradesmen. The usual amount of bribe was from 4*l.* to 5*l.* per head. He had in his hand some very curious papers, addressed to a candidate, and signed by several of the electors, openly asking him what terms he meant to give. He had also a form of paper by which the voter was entitled, after the election, to go to a certain place and there to receive a certain sum of money, or double the amount, according as he had given a single vote, or divided it between the two candidates. He was in a condition to state that upwards of 700 voters had polled at the last election, and 13 out of every 14 of those so polled were bribed. At that place, in 1841, the aggregate expenses of the election were 7,000*l.*, expended in direct corruption of voters. In 1847, the cost had risen to 8,000*l.*, which sum was spent in the direct purchase of votes. And a letter which he had received upon the subject, which had been written shortly after the election, stated that the effects of an election at ——, "were most demoralising and degrading, and that the hospital was filled with men maimed, and bruised, and maddened with drink." He should mention another place, in a borough which he would call "B," where bribery had been carried on in 1847. It was not a small constituency. He would not, of course, name the exact number of votes, but there were between 1,000 and 2,000. He had in that case information from both sides, under the condition of suppressing names, to which he had before referred. In the election of 1847, between 1,000 and 2,000 voters of that place polled; and out of every 28 men who had voted on both sides, 17 received money for their votes. The rate of bribe was much higher in that place than in the other he had mentioned. The sums given ranged at 10*l.*, 12*l.*, and 15*l.*, as the usual price per head in the earlier portion of the election. But later in the day, the prices rose to 50*l.*; and before the close of the day, one or two voters received 100*l.* for their votes. And to show the contaminating and demoralising influence of this system of corruption, where it obtained so extensively, he was sorry to add, that in this case master tradesmen and professional gentlemen were not above taking prices for their votes. In the aggregate a sum of no less than 13,000*l.* was spent at that place in the direct purchase of votes. He had bound himself to the House that he would not give any details to the accuracy of which he could not pledge his own veracity. He should, therefore, be careful of mentioning some other places of which he had not received such perfect proofs. He had, however, received information, which, although it did not enable him to go into details, was yet sufficient to show that the same system of gross notorious bribery prevailed in them; and he asked the House of Commons, was this state of things to be suffered to go on? Was that vile system of bribery to be allowed to continue unchecked and uncontrolled? In not one of those cases which he had detailed to the House, had a petition been presented, or the matter brought before the House. How could it? The losing candidate dare not; he would be himself involved in the punishment he sought to draw upon others. The electors could not petition, because they had a common interest in screening the common corruption; and he was perfectly convinced that if it were the intention of the House of Commons to put a stop to the system, they should adopt another plan than that of petitions, which they would not in such cases obtain. He confessed, he thought the policy which the House had pursued for a long period of time, of punishing corruption by wholesale disfranchisement, had tended very much to diminish the chances of obtaining petitions in such cases. He spoke upon this subject with very great deference to those experienced statesmen who had sanctioned that system. But it was his opinion that to punish extensive bribery by wholesale disfranchisement, was an unjust and unwise course, because the tendency of the present day was to extend popular rights, and such a course was an infringement upon them. But he thought, besides, the wholesale disfranchisement was an unjust punishment, because it punished the innocent with the guilty. It punished posterity for the sins of those who were now alive; and it was justified only upon the ground that they were holding out warning to others. But had such a warning ever been effectual? He believed it never had. If the hand of the rich man were held out with a bride in it, the poor man saw only the gold within his reach, and he never thought—how could he think—of the punishment inflicted upon some other place in an adjoining county which had been disfranchised for corrupt practices? Let them look, for example, at the case of the borough of Great Yarmouth, which had been brought forward last year. He (Sir J. Pakington) was unable at the time to attend the House. Had he been able, he would have opposed, although he had stood alone, the disfranchisement of 1,000 men, because sixteen had been proved to have taken bribes. But it was alleged in that instance, that although sixteen cases only had been proved, the corruption was proved to have been extensive. He begged to remind them that Great Yarmouth was in the county of Norfolk, and they had previously disfranchised the borough of Sudbury, in the county of Suffolk, the very adjoining county, which should have been a warning to Great Yarmouth, if such things served as warnings. Yet Sudbury seemed to have been forgotten. They must not trust to the remedy of disfranchisement, nor should they wait for election petitions, if they wished to convince the country that they were in earnest about stopping these practices. And further, instead of aiming, as all their legislation had hitherto done, at the poor voter, they should aim at the more guilty party by whom the voter was corrupted. He asked, would any man tell him that, in such cases as he had mentioned, the candidates were innocent of the bribery committed? He did not believe any man could think so. He plainly told the House that it was not so.

It was impossible that it should be so. He did not mean to say that cases might not arise in which the candidates might themselves be supposed to be innocent. They all knew that in some instances fathers brought in their sons — political leaders brought in their partisans. But those were the small minority of cases, and even then bribery could not be carried on without the knowledge of the candidate. But in the great majority of cases it was a matter quite notorious that candidates stood upon their own means. They had it in their power to analyse their bills, and they bribed with their own money. And this brought him to the second point of his case. He had shown them that the present provisions against bribery were ineffective, and he now had to propose that they should impose a check upon the candidate instead of upon the voter. It was for these reasons that he ventured to propose that no man should take his seat in the House of Commons until he had made a declaration at the table publicly before the House and the country, that, so far as his knowledge went, he was himself innocent of any corrupt practices. He was aware that objections would be made to such a declaration. He might be told that it might turn out to be only a trap for tender consciences. But he did ask the House, before any hon. Member decided to vote against his Bill upon that ground—he asked them to look to the wording of the declaration which he proposed. He had been careful to word it so that no man could be called upon to declare anything that was not within his own knowledge, and within his own power to ascertain. But he would propose, if the House allowed the Bill to go to a second reading, that it should be afterwards referred to a Select Committee upstairs. He was quite aware of the great difficulties of the subject. He was aware that any declaration ought to be most cautiously drawn up; but it was his intention that that which he proposed should be reconsidered by the Committee upstairs. He hoped, however, that the House would deem that the arguments in favour of the course which he proposed, were stronger than those against it. He had been told only on the previous day by a gentleman well known to many Members of the House, as being generally connected with elections all over the country, that the principle of the Bill which he had introduced was the only principle on which they could hope to put a stop to corrupt practices—that, in fact, they could only hope to gain their end by exciting a feeling on the part of the candidates that their honour and character were involved in the course which they took. He put it, then, to the House, whether, for the protection of candidates themselves, it was not desirable that, when gentlemen of honour and character went down to places where these practices had prevailed, and where, in reality, they had no option, they were compelled to fall in with the customs of the constituency, or their election was hopeless—he put it to the House whether it were not desirable to put such gentlemen on a new and different footing—to enable them to say to their agents, "If you go on with these corrupt practices, you must do so at your own peril; I have a declaration hanging over me, which renders it impossible for me ever to reimburse you?" He thought it was due to principle that when corrupt practices were notoriously rife, and were giving great public scandal, that Members, before they took their seats, should declare that they were not involved in them. He should then propose that it be imperative on Members to make this declaration before they can take their seats; and also, following the precedent of the Qualification Act, that it should be in the power of two electors—in cases in which bribery was suspected—to require that the candidate should make a similar declaration upon the hustings; but this was a part of the Bill that must be submitted to the closest examination in Committee. The next principal enactment which he proposed was, that in cases in which parties had been reported to the House by an Election Committee to have been guilty either of having taken or given bribes, that such parties should be therefore disfranchised for life. Improved as the constitution of Election Committees now was, he was sure that no parties would be so reported, unless a very clear case had been made out against them; and surely when such practices existed, those who were guilty ought to be held as unworthy of exercising the electoral function. The only remaining material enactment of the Bill which he should propose, was the total repeal of the bribery oath now in existence. He felt that in grappling with the offence of bribery, the candidate was the proper person to be attacked, and that therefore it would be useless and unjust to retain an oath which affected only the elector. It was manifestly unfair, he contended, towards men who had been overpowered by temptations which they could not resist, to be asked, when the time of election came, in the face of all the constituency, before all their neighbours, either to confess the offence, or to perjure themselves. He was sorry, indeed, to say that experience proved too strongly which was the alternative preferred. He would not trouble the House by entering into further details. He knew that some objections would be made to his measure; but he entertained a confident hope that these objections were such as might, by a further consideration of the subject, be completely removed. He might be told, that if he wished to put a stop to bribery, the real remedy would be to extend the franchise—to enlarge constituencies. Now he begged to say, that he had no decided views as to extending the franchise. He did not bind himself to any particular number of constituencies, or to any particular extent of franchise. When it could be proved that the franchise could be safely extended, then no one would be more glad than he would to consent to such an extension. But before he could consent to such a step, he should like to see the right of voting more valued than it was now — he should like to see constituencies more sensible of what the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire (Mr. Disraeli) called the dignity of exercising the electoral franchise as a high public privilege, and not the practice of selling it as a marketable commodity. These were the views which he entertained as to the extension of the franchise. But he would be allowed to ask the House whether they could consent to the enlargement of constituencies as a means of preventing bribery? Experience and reason answered in the negative. Experience could not fail of pointing to the cases of Nottingham and Norwich, where, in days not long gone by, those large constituencies were the most notoriously corrupt in the country. And did not reason tell them that if they were dealing either with thousands or with hundreds—that if parties were nicely balanced, there would still be a temptation on the part of the candidate to buy, and on the part of the voter to sell, when a limited number would suffice to turn the scale one way or the other. No doubt he might be told that the severity of the Committee of last Session had put a stop to bribery. Now, certainly, the Committees of last Session did by no means shrink from the duty imposed upon them. Indeed, in some cases, he thought that they were too severe; but he did not think that their severity would stop bribery. He believed, on the contrary, that it would only have the effect of preventing the presentation of petitions. There was but one subject more which he wished to touch on. It had been said that there was a grave deficiency in his Bill, inasmuch as it did not propose to deal with the offence of treating. Now, he hoped that the House would make some allowance for a natural desire to deal with only one very difficult subject at a time. But he had suggested to some of his friends, to whom he had spoken on the matter, that in the Select Committee the subject might be fairly raised; and that if, in the opinion of that Committee, it would be wise to include treating in the measure, he would then have no objection to the introduction of a clause upon the subject. Certainly he did think that some regulation regarding treating would be highly desirable. He had now only to express his hope that the House would pause before rejecting the Bill in its present state. But whatever the decision of the House might be, there would remain to him the satisfaction that he had made a single-minded attempt to check what he believed to be a great and a growing evil—an evil which was sapping the foundations of a representative system which had long been the boast of England, and the admiration of the world. They were proud of the purity of their public men. But if they valued the purity of their public men, they ought to be most jealous of the purity of constituent bodies; for if the latter were allowed to be corrupt, the example would become contagious. He had now to ask the House to give the Bill a second reading. It did not pretend to be a measure for the prevention of all bribery, but it would certainly tend to check anything like a system of gross and wholesale corruption, while he thought that the House was bound to give a fair trial to what was a fair experiment, or at least to offer some homage to the principle of purity of election. He moved that the Bill be read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

COLONEL SIBTHORP stated that he did not intend to press the Amendment of which he had given notice, as the hon. Baronet who had just sat down had announced his intention of referring the subject to a Select Committee. He must, however, say, that he declined altogether to legislate upon a matter of this importance upon the information which had been obtained by the hon. Baronet the Member for Droitwich. Upon such secret information—of course not obtained at Droitwich—he (Colonel Sibthorp) could place no reliance; neither was he prepared to be guided by the *ipse dixit* of any hon. Member whatsoever. If he entertained objections to the Bill when he gave notice of his Amendment, they had been increased tenfold by the speech which the hon. Baronet had made in support of it. Where the hon. Baronet obtained his information from, he could not for the life of him make out. It appeared rather to be the result of some secret inquiry, and he should always oppose a Bill which was based upon information derived from secret sources. The hon. Baronet then talked about the purity of public men. Good God! the purity of public men; where was it?—what was it? He had always thought and now boldly declared that the Treasury bench was the seat where, above all others, the grossest corruption prevailed. But he had heard with infinite satisfaction that the hon. Member for Hull (Mr. Baines) who now occupied a seat on the Treasury bench as First Commissioner of the Poor Law, had refused to take office if he were not permitted to pursue what course he thought proper in reference to the navigation laws; and they had received an intimation from the noble Lord at the head of the Government—the Member for the city of London, which was all purity—that he had absolved the hon. Gentleman from voting against the repeal of the navigation laws; but the noble Lord did not give him liberty to vote as he liked upon every other question. No; the noble Lord was too cautious for that. He said the navigation laws was an open question; but questions might be open out of doors but not in that House. An open question out of doors was a very different thing from what was considered an open question in Downing-street. The purity of public men, indeed! Faugh! stuff! It was mere moonshine. It was impossible for them to be pure. Bribery and corruption were part of their system, and their impurity was as notorious as the sun at noonday. He could not help thinking that the hon. Baronet who introduced the Bill would have done much better had he delayed the second reading of the Bill until the House had seen the information which the hon. Baronet said he had read. Besides, there was a Bill coming from another place, and he should like to know, before they disposed of this one, what that Bill would be. A Bill was also introduced last Session into the House upon the subject, to which great attention was paid, and which incurred a great amount of expense —a waste of time, printing, and paper, and yet it all ended in smoke. And then the noble Lord followed it up with another Bill, which he managed to get through the House; but when it got up to another place, the other place wanted to shut up themselves, and they kicked out the Bill. But now it seemed another Bill was rising in the other place out of the ashes of the Bill they had knocked on the head last Session. Now, he would not say anything against the other place, but he always understood that that House looked with eyes of jealousy upon the intermeddling of the other place; but be that as it might, he, for one, did not like this interference of the other place. Why did they not mind their own business? But it might be possible that there was not too much purity in the other place, although it contained a mitre. What had bishops and priests to do with this question? What had Christian members of the Church to do with it. Why, nothing at all: and he hoped they would (though he hardly expected it) abstain from voting on the resuscitated Bill. If this Bill were passed, it would destroy that good feeling which had so long existed between the higher and the lower classes; and it was well known what care the wealthier classes bestowed upon their humble dependants. If, however, there was to be a searching inquiry into all their acts—if secret machinations were to exist, no man would be safe. Bribery and corruption had existed, and, doubtless, would exist. He hoped, at least, however, that he had never been guilty of such acts; he was, therefore, altogether free from the charge; but if eight or nine Bills had been introduced since 1841, for the purpose of altering the present state of things, and yet had proved inoperative for that purpose, he should like to know what chance the present measure stood of success. He hoped the Bill would be rejected, because he believed that every man ought to do what he liked with his own. At least allowing a man that permission was but carrying out the much-vaunted principle of free trade; but he supposed a free-trader (a hair of whose head he would not hurt) could not bribe; it was quite impossible; he was too pure a being to do so. He believed the Bill to be absurd, to be full of equivocations, and that it would prevent the purest and most honourable men from coming to the House and conscientiously taking the usual oaths. Nevertheless, as the hon. Baronet had consented to have the matter referred to a Committee upstairs, he should not oppose the Bill in its present stage, not wishing to thwart fair investigation. He trusted, however, when it came down again, if it came down at all, that it would so in a far different shape, and inculcate very different principles to that of the principle of obtaining evidence, by inquiring secretly of Mr. Smith, or Mr. Tomkins, disappointed voters perhaps: he would strongly oppose it. The parties who furnished evidence in support of the Bill were like a thief in the night, who came secretly to steal your character, and to put your silver spoons in his pocket.

SIR J. HANMER said, it was perfectly true that former attempts had been made, without avail, as had been stated by the hon. Member who had just resumed his seat, to suppress the corrupt practices which had been so long carried on at elections. He hoped, however, that the present attempt of the hon. Baronet the Member for Droitwich (Sir J. Pakington), though he (Sir J. Hanmer) was not able to give his support to all its provisions, would have a different result; and he was relieved from the difficulty under which the objections he entertained to the Bill as it then stood, placed him by the proposal of the hon. Gentleman to refer it to a Select Committee upstairs; and he trusted, through the searching investigation and practical suggestions of that body, that the House would be enabled to pass a measure to put an end to those evils which threatened, unless at once checked or restrained, to sap the foundations of Parliament itself. It was true that, heretofore, the attempts of official and of unofficial Members to stop the evil had proved abortive; but unless a remedy was devised without delay the day of vengeance was at hand. After all the evidence before Committees—all the knowledge that must be possessed personally by the whole House—why was it that the question should be so unwillingly entertained, as if Gentlemen could doubt that they had a great evil, urgently pressing on their consideration? He could find, as he had said, many objections to the Bill, but he preferred to make them in Committee, where they might be separately dealt with, rather than impede its progress at present. As the Committee was to take into its consideration the subject of treating, that would be another reason for which the Motion of the hon. Baronet should have his support. The hon. and gallant Member (Colonel Sibthorp) had said that if the Bill were passed no one would be safe. Had he (Colonel Sibthorp) been in his place, he should have asked him if any one was safe at the present moment? No one would be safe until the law with respect to bribery and treating, and their punishment, was placed on an intelligible footing. The difference between treating and bribery was by no means clearly defined, and a variety of opinions existed on the subject. He need not go any further back than last Session to find instances of this difference of opinion. No less than three different judgments were given last Session on the subject of treating. Mr. Hodgson, who had been elected for Carlisle, was unseated because treating had been carried on by his agents, but without his knowledge and consent. It was thought he had a right to contest the seat again; he did so, and was elected, and no doubt sat in that House with great advantage to the city. The other decisions were North Cheshire and Horsham. The two Gentlemen who were petitioned against declared that they made repeated declarations to their agents and friends against treating, and would not be responsible for treating in any manner. It having been alleged before the Committee that great treating had, nevertheless, taken place at the North Cheshire election, the Committee decided that as Mr. C. Leigh could not be sued at law for the expenses of treating, the offence had not been proved, and he was therefore allowed to retain his seat. But in the case of Horsham, where Mr. Fitzgerald was placed in the same situation, he having protested against treating, and having declared he would not be responsible for it, he had been declared guilty of treating, and had been removed from his seat. Now, here were three decisions opposed to each other, showing the necessity for a clear settlement of the law. There was another, though an incidental, question which arose in the Horsham Committee. They not only decided that Mr. Fitzgerald, who had the majority of votes, should be deprived of his seat, and was incapable of sitting, because at a previous election some treating had been carried on against his instructions and without his knowledge, but the Committee declared that a noble Lord, who had the minority of votes, was duly elected. Now, that question arose incidentally, but it was a very important question, and he hoped that if the Bill of the hon. Baronet was to be referred to a Committee upstairs, the terms of reference would not be small and narrow, and that the cases in which existing decisions of Committees of the House conflicted with the decisions in the courts of law would be submitted to that Committee, and that the House might arrive at a state of things such as the hon. and gallant Member for Lincoln so much desired, namely, when the country would get a good, plain, and intelligible law on the subject. Fault might well be found with the declaratory clause as it then stood; but it was one thing to stand criticising a particular project, and another, to be obtuse to the suggestions of every contested election. He was not satisfied with the state of things which they presented, and he believed the people could not be satisfied, especially as changes in the electoral system were so frequently pressed for. Such changes could not be safely made at any time, unless elections were better secured by a revision of the existing law. As a part of that revision he gave his cordial support for sending up this Bill, objectionable as it might now seem, to a Select Committee.

VISCOUNT MAHON said, he felt sure that there must be a general feeling in the House that the hon. Baronet the Member for Droitwich deserved its thanks for the very judicious and very temperate manner in which he had stated his opinions on this subject to the House. He (Viscount Mahon) thought the course proposed, of referring this Bill to a Select Committee, to be in every respect a proper one. But various doubts and difficulties occurred to him with respect to this Bill, which he was anxious to state to the House, not in any hostile spirit to the measure, but in order that they might receive a candid consideration from the House and the Committee. By the 2nd Clause of the Bill it was proposed that any Member "who shall, by the report of any Committee of the House of Commons, be declared to have been guilty of bribery, shall be for ever thereafter incapable to be elected a Member of Parliament." Now, there might be periods when party spirit ran high, in which it would be dangerous to have such an enactment as this. Let the House consider how such a regulation would have acted in former years. There had been times when the exclusion of great party leaders from Parliament would have been considered an object of paramount importance. How would such a rule have acted in the case of Mr. Pitt or Mr. Fox, or any other eminent men upon whose talents and exertions their party depended? Such a rule would have placed it in the power of any five Members of the House of Commons—or three Members even, as constituting the majority — to declare, upon doubtful evidence, and in a period of party excitement, that the head of their political opponents — the very man on whom their opponents depended for their political existence—should be incapacitated from ever again sitting in Parliament. Let the House just reflect upon the temptation which such a rule would hold out to an indulgence in party spirit. Such a temptation might not be offered at the present moment, but would be, in periods of party excitement, such as, sooner or later, must be expected to recur. There was another clause in the Bill to which he entertained an objection on nearly similar, though not on equal, grounds. The 6th Clause provided that persons declared by Election Committees to be guilty of personally giving or receiving bribes, should forfeit their right of voting. He admitted that there was much advantage in such a clause. Thus, for example, the Committee of which he had been a Member, and which sat last Session, on the Lancaster election, had declared the election to be void, on the ground that several voters had received bribes; and the Committee were in the painful position, that the writ had to issue and the election be determined by the very persons whom the Committee had to report to the House as having been guilty of bribery. But here, again, as in the former case, there was danger of party spirit intervening. Admitting that there was much advantage to be derived from such a change, he thought the new rule would be liable to abuse whenever parties in that House should be nicely balanced; and when, under the influence of party feeling, a vote or two struck off the register in any particular borough, might turn the scale at the next election for that borough. He thought this difficulty might be obviated by such an alteration in the clause as would require the unanimous decision of the Committee that electors had been guilty of receiving a bribe. As Election Committees were at present composed, containing as they did a fusion of both parties in the House, he thought that his suggestion would preclude the possibility of a prejudiced decision. That decision would then either be not unanimous, and in that case of no effect; or else it would be unanimous, and in that case above all suspicion of partiality or injustice. It might also be doubted whether the disfranchisement of those guilty electors should be perpetual, or should be limited to the next ensuing election. He threw out these hints for the consideration of the hon. Baronet and of the House. As to the general subject of declarations by Members, he should prefer to reserve his opinion until after the Committee had sat and reported to the House. He saw advantages in the present proposal; but he also saw considerable objections. He should be glad if the difficulties at which he had glanced would be removed by the Committee; and he now gave his cordial assent to the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. AGLIONBY said, he should support this Bill, as its object was to suppress bribery at elections. Ever since he had sat in that House he had supported measures having the same object; but he felt bound to admit that those measures had not been attended with much success. He should give the present Bill a most careful consideration; but he must express his fears that it would prove, like those which had preceded it, inefficacious for the suppression of the evils complained of. But the Bill might be so far amended in Committee, that though it would not be useful now, it might be made useful then. He would not now go into its details, because the proper time for discussing them would be when the Bill was before the Committee; but there were one or two points, bearing upon the principle of the measure, that he could not now altogether omit noticing. With regard to the declaration to be made by every Member before taking his seat, as proposed in the first clause, he must say, it seemed to him very like a net or a trap, to catch the more scrupulous and tenderly conscientious Members of that House, but which would offer no barrier to hon. Members who were less delicate and more lax in their feelings as to matters of conscience. He was afraid the declaration would dwindle down into a matter of feeling and construction; and that many would not hesitate to swallow the declaration, while the more sensitive and more honourable would shrink from taking it. Here they were called upon to declare that they had not, either directly or indirectly, offered any reward to induce, or endeavour to induce, any person to vote for them, or against any other man, or to abstain from voting altogether. Now, he had his doubts whether many hon. Gentlemen in that House could lay their hands upon their hearts, and subscribe to all this. Many might swallow it, and perhaps they had never offered any reward. But there was one class of rewards to which he would refer. How many of those around him could undertake to say, that they had never asked at the Treasury Office for place or favour? They might be asked by one of their constituents who supported them to find a place for his son or his nephew, and they apply to the Government accordingly in behalf of the man who had given them a generous and confiding support at the election. It was a mixed motive in such a case that induced hon. Members to apply for situations under the Government; and he must be a very strong-minded man indeed if he did not do it in order to oblige a supporter, and secure his continued support. Perhaps it would be said that they made the application out of pure motives of kindness, for situations, for instance, in the Excise or Customs; but he would put the matter to them in this way: Did they apply with equal feelings of alacrity and energy whether it was a supporter or an opponent who came to court their influence? If they were equally impartial in this respect, then he would ask, did they not act from their hopes of turning the voter who opposed them into a friend and supporter? Now, he did not shrink from avowing that he had himself applied for these places; and therefore he felt himself involved in difficulty with regard to this declaration. He had certainly never tried for very high game, where hundreds or thousands a year were to be obtained; but he had applied for places for postmen at 12*s*. a week, and he had very seldom got more. This was really a very serious matter, because many might shrink to take this declaration. He would not quarrel with those who should take it—some might do it very conscientiously, but many others could not. But the Bill would altogether be inoperative, independently of that difficulty. But they were not doing their duty to the country; they were afraid of shadows, they were merely frightening the people; but they must do essential service in meeting the difficulty at once. His advice was, let them openly disfranchise some, and enfranchise more. Disfranchise the freemen in boroughs. [Colonel SIBTHORP: Hear, hear!] Yes, and in the city of Lincoln, too. Disfranchise those freemen as freemen entitled to vote as electors, but enfranchise them at once as householders. He had no objection to their having votes as householders, but the old leaven ought not to be left to taint the whole constituency. If they disfranchised some classes, let them, at the same time, widely extend the privilege of the suffrage, accompanied by the ballot, and then they might hope, but not before, to cure the evils which such Bills as this professed to seek to repress. There was another class who greatly endangered the purity of election proceedings. He alluded to the publicans, few of whom could withstand temptation when it came before them on the one side, with the advantage of their family and relations on the other. He would not have them disfranchised, but he would have illegitimate inducements taken away from them, by increasing the number of voters to such an extent as that open houses could no longer be kept for so extensive a constituency. With regard to voters employed in the royal dockyards, hon. Members connected with the Government might not like to acknowledge it, but who could deny that the almost invariable feeling amongst the workmen was, that they must vote for whoever sat upon this (the Ministerial) side of the House, whether it were Whigs or Tories? And there were men seeking employment in the different departments, who, not feeling justified in changing their politics according to whatever party might be in power, yet satisfied their consciences by a compromise, and abstained from voting altogether. He again implored the House to meet the matter boldly, for the feeling of the country would be sure to go along with them; and if they extended the franchise greatly, and adopted vote by ballot, then, but not till then, they would put an effectual check upon bribery and corruption at elections.

SIR G. GREY said, that nobody could be more ready than himself to give full credit to the hon. Baronet (Sir J. Pakington), for the attention he had bestowed upon this subject, and the pains he had taken in preparing a measure which he believed would be effectual in preventing an evil, which he (Sir G. Grey) agreed with him, notwithstanding all the Acts already passed for the prevention of corruption and bribery at elections, still continued to exist to a great extent in some constituencies. And though it might be the general wish of the House not to oppose the second reading of this Bill, or refuse the Select Committee upon it, yet he (Sir G. Grey) must be allowed to mention the difficulties that occurred to his mind in connexion with the adoption of that course. As he understood the second reading of a Bill, he believed that by assenting to it the House would be agreeing to the principle of the Bill; and the object of sending it to a Select Committee was to ensure a more minute consideration as to its details, by hon. Members appointed for the purpose, who, after giving it that careful consideration which they were able to bestow upon it in a Committee upstairs, should report to the House the alterations they deemed it expedient should be made in the details, but keeping strictly to the principle of the measure. But he must protest against the doctrine of his hon. Friend the Member for Cockermouth (Mr. Aglionby), who held that it was a sufficient ground for supporting the second reading, that he agreed in the title of the measure, though he dissented altogether from its principle and details. That hon. Gentleman had said, that differing as he did from every clause, from the principles and from the details of this Bill, still, if he found a Bill upon the table of this House, purporting to have for its object the prevention of bribery and corruption at elections, he would have no hesitation in voting for its second reading, or for its reference to a Select Committee. Why, he would ask the hon. Gentleman, whether, if it was proposed to transport Members of Parliament or voters at elections who were guilty of bribery, he would vote for the second reading of a Bill brought in for the purpose stated in the title to be the object of the Bill now before the House? His hon. Friend the Member for Flint (Sir J. Hanmer) said that he objected to the Bill, and would not vote for the second reading if it were not proposed to refer it to a Select Committee; but what his hon. Friend wanted was not a Select Committee on the Bill, but a Committee to inquire into the whole subject of bribery and treating at elections, and the decisions of the Committees on that subject; in short, such an inquiry as would destroy all chance of any Bill being passed on the subject during the present Session. He (Sir G. Grey) had not noticed, from any one hon. Gentleman who had spoken upon this Motion, any approbation expressed of a single clause of it as it now stood. The noble Lord (Viscount Mahon) had objected very much to one clause, and had expressed no approbation of any of the other clauses. He said he thought a Committee upstairs should consider, not what should be the terms of the declaration that hon. Members should be required to subscribe before taking their seats, which would be a perfectly Parliamentary object, but the noble Viscount seemed to think that the Committee ought to determine whether any declaration should be required at all. He (Sir G. Grey) did not think this the proper duty of the Committee; but the House should now determine whether, on the one hand, they ought to repeal the existing bribery oath on the allegation that it had been found ineffectual; and whether, on the other hand, it was advisable to impose upon Members, previous to taking their seats, the necessity of taking an oath or making a declaration, couched in analogous terms to the oath applied to electors, and which, as experience proved, tended more to promote perjury and deceit, than to prevent bribery or corruption. The hon. Baronet (Sir J. Pakington) had stated the general principles of the Bill very fairly. He said there were three main points—first, the declaration to be imposed upon candidates, if required, in the manner now adopted with respect to qualification, and the declaration which was to be required to be made at the table by every Member before he took his seat in the House; second, the disqualification for ever from sitting in Parliament of any Member, on conviction of bribery or corruption before a court of law, or by the report of a Committee of this House upon an election petition, declaring him to have been guilty of these acts; and the third, the repeal of the existing bribery oath. Now, with regard to the first he (Sir G. Grey) had heard nothing to show that it was expedient to impose a declaration of this kind. He believed it would prove ineffectual against bribery, although it might prove effectual to this extent, that it might deter some of those who had not been guilty of bribery or any moral offence in obtaining their election, but who might, at the same time, have countenanced acts which they might feel a Committee of this House might hold to be bribery—it might deter such from taking their places in this House, and thereby exclude the most honest and most efficient Members from seats in Parliament; whilst he believed many Members, who would take a different view of the subject, might take the oath—he did not say dishonestly—they might not examine the subject minutely themselves, but might ask the opinion of counsel whether they could make the declaration or not. In such cases he did not think this declaration would prevent bribery or corruption whatever other result it might lead to. The hon. Baronet had deprecated, and fairly so, criticism upon the wording of this declaration. He had said, if the House consented to the second reading, he was willing to amend it in Committee. He (Sir G. Grey) thought it, therefore, unnecessary to make any remarks upon it, further than to say that serious objections might be taken to the terms of the declaration, even if the hon. Baronet's principle were acceded to. He (Sir G. Grey) was not prepared to agree to the imposition of such an oath or declaration, because he believed, for the reasons he had stated, it would be ineffectual in many cases, and prejudicial in others; and, therefore, to this part of the Bill he was not prepared to assent. Then came the second clause: and he must say he entirely concurred in the objection taken by the noble Lord (Viscount Mahon) to the provision that appeared to him monstrous and pregnant with danger—namely, that should a Member be convicted of bribery before a court of law, or be, by the report of a Committee of that House, declared to be guilty of bribery, by himself or his agents, with his knowledge or consent, he should for ever be disqualified from sitting in Parliament. The hon. Baronet wished, however, to modify that clause; but he (Sir G. Grey) did not know what modification he proposed; and he must say, with every respect for the fairness and impartiality that had marked the decisions of the Election Committees of that House, that he thought it would be a most dangerous thing to enact, that three Members, constituting the majority of a Committee of five—who might be unlearned and unskilled in legal matters, and not the fittest persons to decide upon nice questions of law—should be able to disqualify for ever from sitting in Parliament any man, however valuable his services might be to the country, and whatever interest his constituents might have in being represented by him. He had not been able to learn from the hon. Baronet's opening speech what the nature of his modification of this clause would be; but he must say that to the clause as it now stood, he entertained very grave and insuperable objections. [Sir J. PAKINGTON: He had intended in his speech to state that that was to be altered—he would submit another clause.] But the House did not know what the clause was, and as the Bill stood, he decidedly objected to that part of it. He had no objection to the 3rd Clause; but the hon. Baronet did not state that as one of the main points of the Bill. Then, with regard to the disqualification of electors, he entertained similar objections in principle, though not, perhaps, in degree, to those he had already stated in the case of the disqualification of a Member, on the report of a Committee of this House. With regard to the clause repealing the bribery oath administered to electors, he did not attach much importance to the retention of this oath, because he believed it rather promoted than prevented bribery, and was oftener used for creating delay than for checking corruption. He should be sorry to oppose the reference of the Bill to a Select Committee, if he thought the Bill could be so amended as really to accomplish what he was sure the hon. Baronet so much desired. He would be most happy to assist him, in the endeavour to impose some more effectual check than was afforded by the present law upon bribery and corrupt practices at elections; but he must protest against sending upstairs to a Select Committee a Bill, upon the principle of which they were not agreed, for the purpose of its being changed in Committee into a measure totally different both in principle and in detail.

MR. G. J. TURNER entirely differed with the hon. Member for Cockermouth (Mr. Aglionby), who had recommended that the ancient freemen of our present constituencies should be totally disfranchised. Such an unjust proceeding would have the effect of taking away from an important class of their poor fellow-countrymen all that encouragement to honest industry which afforded the best guarantee for their good conduct and sobriety. Was the hon. Gentleman aware that the ancient freemen of England set just as high a value upon their privilege of freedom as the hon. Gentleman himself attached to his own seat in that House? Apart from political considerations, which in his view were adverse to any such scheme of disfranchisement, as tending to reduce the constituencies of the country to a uniform standard, he would upon the principle of justice give the most determined opposition to such a measure. With reference to the Bill now before them, he could not agree to the appointment of the Committee, except upon the understanding that the whole subject would be fully considered, and a perfectly new Bill brought in. As it now stood, it proposed to introduce an entirely new principle into the English law, for it called upon a man to say he would not be guilty of an offence before he had been convicted. The House had fallen into a very great mistake at present upon this subject. It was true they had heard last Session of a great many reports of Committees convicting Members and boroughs of bribery and corruption; but this did not arise from any increased corruption existing in the country: he was perfectly justified in denying that our constituencies had lately grown in any degree worse in this respect than they had been in former years; and he believed the House of Commons had never been more free from the taint of corruption than it was at the present time. He would tell them why it was, then, that they had heard so much of late about corrupt practices at elections. The reason was, that by the Act passed in the last Parliament, they had rendered acts, acts of bribery that never would have been considered, and never ought to be considered, as constituting bribery or corruption. Anybody at all acquainted with popular constituencies knew perfectly well that when a candidate called to see one of his voters, he was often asked to partake of some refreshment, or drink the voter's and his family's health. And yet if the candidate dared some time afterwards merely to return this simple act of hospitality, he was told by the Act of the last Parliament, for the first time, that he was guilty of bribery or corrupt treating. Then, again, why should they refuse to allow some small compensation to humble working men who could not afford to lose a day's work, as they were often obliged to do, to go to vote at the election? Let them lay down a small sum to be fixed as the rate of compensation in such cases; and then they might be as strict as they liked in all cases where the payment exceeded the limited amount. By this means they would put a more effectual check upon corrupt practices than they could establish by any other expedient. The reports of the Committees often declared that the agents of the candidate were guilty of bribery, and yet this House never directed any of its proceedings against the guilty agents. If the evil of corruption were a widely spread one, why, then, let it by all means be thoroughly eradicated, if possible; but why should the agents, who were often the only parties deserving of punishment, be always permitted to escape in this way? Either the acts done by the agents amounted to an offence against the privileges of the House, or they did not; if they amounted to a breach of privilege, let the agents be punished; if in consequence of their having been done when Parliament was not sitting, they did not amount to a breach of privilege, let a law be passed to make such conduct on the part of agents a breach of privilege. His feeling was so strong against the declaration and disqualification clauses—and he was so certain that the measure would prove abortive—that he should give his strongest opposition to the measure. Upon all the grounds he had stated, if the right hon. Baronet the Secretary of State for the Home Department divided against the Bill, he should support him; if he did not, he certainly would feel bound himself to divide the House.

MR. COCKBURN said, it seemed to him that the Bill contained so many desirable provisions, that it ought to be read a second time and sent to a Select Committee upstairs. He would not state broadly that all its enactments were deserving of the immediate adoption of the House; but he certainly thought that the declaration proposed to be taken by Members immediately after being elected, was calculated to have a most beneficial effect. He assumed for the purposes of the present argument, that bribery existed to a great extent; and as this, at all events, was the general feeling of the country, he hoped the House would not suffer itself to be led away by any doubt of the fact which hon. Members might have thrown out in the course of the discussion. They all recollected the reports of the various Election Committees last Session. They knew that Members had been unseated on the ground of bribery and corruption, and that vast numbers of petitions complaining of bribery and treating were presented and withdrawn at a most significant and important period—namely, on the eve of the Committees meeting to investigate the truth of their contents. He therefore ventured to assert that the evil of bribery and corruption—whether it existed to the degree which some asserted, or to a lesser degree—still did prevail to an extent that called for the interference of the House, and the application of any remedies that might be devised. This being so, he would proceed to consider the question whether the measure now proposed was likely to effect a beneficial alteration; and he would first take the declaration to be made by the Members. He believed that that declaration could have no other than a most salutary result; and, indeed, so strong were his convictions on this point, that if he had not been anticipated by the hon. Baronet (Sir J. Pakington), it had been his own firm determination to bring in a Bill similar to the present. Supposing they took the most notorious case of general corruption—for instance, the one referred to by the hon. Baronet the Member for Droitwich, where in a constituency of 3,000 voters, seventeen out of every twenty-eight received bribes to the amount of 10*l.* a man, could any one believe for a moment, that the candidate did not find the money, and was not perfectly cognisant of the facts? Then, would not such a declaration as was now proposed meet that case? Were any man's notions and sentiments with regard to truth and falsehood so perverted, that, after having furnished the money to bribe the voters, he would come there and in the face of the House and the country make the declaration? He (Mr. Cockburn) apprehended that it would be perfectly impossible. This additional advantage, too, would be gained, that if any man dared to do so, and he was afterwards detected and convicted of the offence, the present lax and conventional morality which passed over such cases lightly, would be superseded, and disgrace and dishonour would be visited on the offending individual. They would thus bring into harmonious action the morality of society and of the law, and one of the most effectual checks against bribery would be introduced. But then it was said there were cases in which scrupulous men could not make a declaration, which was nothing more than this, that the Member had not by bribery corrupted, or endeavoured to corrupt, any person who voted in his favour. But the hon. Member for Cockermouth (Mr. Aglionby) said it was questionable as to whether these matters came within the operation of the declaration. And why? Because the hon. and learned Gentleman supposed that there might be a reward given for a vote a long time after the election had taken place; not, as he said, for the purpose of corrupting the voter, but that such reward might be given to maintain an influence at the next election. If it was so given, he could only say it was a practice which the law ought at once to put down. It mattered not whether the practice was adopted antecedent or subsequent to an election, it ought equally to constitute bribery within the meaning of the law, and the sooner the question was brought to the test the better. He must say, that if the hon. and learned Member for Cockermouth had ever lent himself to such practices, the sooner they were done away with the better. Then the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Turner) said, that no Member ought to be called upon to make the declaration before he was convicted of the offence; and certainly, if bribery existed only to a trifling extent, the plea might be urged with some show of reason, that it would be tantamount to an insult to ask every Member to testify against it; but when it was known that the practice prevailed extensively, the making of the declaration would have the effect of separating the guilty from the uncorrupt, of severing the pure from those who could not take the declaration. It was also said, that some would be so lost to all sense of shame, that they would come forward and take it. He could not believe the assertion; for, although at the present moment the loss of a seat was all that corrupt practices entailed, yet, if they came to superadd to the guilt of an infraction of the law the dishonour which would attach to the violation of all principle by making a declaration contrary to the truth, they must see that the man so acting would be branded with an infamy which would prevent him from showing his face again in public. He, therefore, thought that the declaration would hit upon one of the most effectual means for preventing the objectionable practice. By the next part of the Bill it was proposed that the Member or candidate convicted of bribery should be prevented from sitting in the House for all time to come; and the question was, whether Parliament would enact that provision. He believed himself, that, unless it were adopted, the House would never put down bribery. He was persuaded that they were now, for the first time, beginning to legislate at the right end. Hitherto they had applied themselves to the imposition of penalties on the voters, and not on the elected — on the tempted, and not on the tempter. There was something very attractive and irresistible to a poor voter in a large money consideration. The man, perhaps, had a wife and family dependent on him for support; his interest in good legislation, as distinguished from bad, was very remote; but the immediate pecuniary advantage was of a tangible nature, and the temptation was almost irresistible. It was in vain to hold out to him the prospect of disfranchisement, in the event of his yielding to the temptation. But the temptation was immediate, and detection was remote and contingent, and thus he yielded to the offer. If the House wanted to put down these practices, they must begin at the other end, and make the man who bribed responsible for his acts; and with reference to the briber, they certainly could not make their penalties too severe. The man who set the example of violating the law of the land by corrupting a constituency, and sapping the basis of all right and justice, was not fit to be a legislator. As they punished the voter by the loss of his franchise, in common justice they ought to disfranchise the man who had led him into criminality; and, therefore, for these reasons, this provision of the Bill was well worthy the attention of Parliament. But when the hon. Baronet the Member for Droitwich went a step further, and proposed that perpetual disqualification of a Member or candidate should follow upon a conviction for bribery by an Election Commitee, he (Mr. Cockburn) differed from him. He would extend that penalty to the crime of bribery, if the conviction took place before the ordinary tribunals of the country. If his conviction followed upon an appeal before a judge and jury, then let his disfranchisement be pronounced; but he confessed that he was loath to put such a power as was proposed into the hands of a tribunal composed like that of an Election Committee. Not but he must say, that the improvements which had taken place latterly in the constitution of Parliamentary Committees was so great, that these bodies had entitled themselves to the confidence of the House and the country; but when he recollected that five Members taken from that House were liable to be strangely affected by party feelings, particularly in times of great political excitement, caution should be exercised in extending to them extraordinary powers. While the House maintained its jurisdiction in matters of election petitions, it must of necessity form its tribunals of such materials as it possessed—namely, its own Members; and if these Members were not kept within the limits which now existed—that of saying whether an election was valid or not—they would be placed in a very painful position, if, in addition to their other duties, they had to impose penalties. He had met many hon. Members coming fresh from party conflicts, and from debates in that House, when they were irritated by personal collisions, and when the annihilation of a particular individual might be a matter of the greatest importance to them; and if they, with such feelings, were constituted a tribunal for the purposes now proposed, and invested with the powers suggested, great injury might be committed. He, therefore, thought, that part of the Bill should not receive the sanction of Parliament. But the measure contained so many excellent provisions, and was, moreover, so very desirable a step in the right direction, that the House would not discharge its duty in the face of the public, who firmly believed that a vast deal of corrupt practices prevailed, if it were not allowed to pass the second reading.

Mr. HENLEY said, that the hon. and learned Member who had just sat down commenced his observations by assuming, for the purposes of argument, that there was a great and increasing degree of corruption in the constituencies of this country, and singularly enough he concluded by making the assertion that he did not know whether that impression were right or wrong. The hon. and learned Gentleman advocated the propriety of the declaration required to be taken by Members before they took their seats, that they had not been guilty of those acts of bribery. The hon. and learned Gentleman said this would give an opportunity to honest men to separate from dishonest men. The hon. and learned Gentleman had not followed the Bill, but had given his own definition of bribery. Now, the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Aglionby), could not agree with the hon. and learned Member for Southampton as to what the terms of this declaration might be; therefore if these Gentlemen took a different view upon this declaration—two hon. Gentlemen conversant with the question—if they felt they could not agree what it meant, what must be the position of the unlearned? The hon. Baronet who had introduced this Bill had himself told the House that the oath taken by the electors had wholly failed to produce any effect; and yet he proposed the same mode of proceeding at the other end of the bargain. He (Mr. Henley) believed there were many gallant Gentlemen in the House who knew what was done in the case of the purchase of commissions in the Army; but was not something given beyond the regulation price? [Sir J. Graham observed that the form of declaration alluded to by the hon. Member was now discontinued.] He had just been told that the practice had been discontinued, of which he was not aware. Then he came to the question whether he should follow the course suggested by many hon. Members, who, disliking the principle of the Bill, were, nevertheless, content to take it to a Select Committee—in short, though not liking the practice of introducing a Bill the principle of which they disliked, still they hoped it might be so altered in the Select Committee as to meet their view. Now, that was a vicious principle. If hon. Members thought this declaration was not a right principle, let them vote against this Bill—if they thought it right, let them vote for it. Then as to excluding a man for ever from a seat in that House by the sentence of a Committee of that House, let hon. Gentlemen see what a premium this would hold out to conspiracy. A leader of a party in that House, by means of persons out of the House, said to be acting on his behalf, might secure the object of excluding a Member. Now the subject had been touched upon as to the promise of reward. The hon. Baronet was so shrewd a man that he would not have introduced the word unless he had felt it to be necessary for his object. But what was to be the meaning of the term reward? It might be in the shape of office; it might be a reward to the Jew to vote for his emancipation; there might be other matters of equal political anxiety. Scrupulous men might think that these were rewards. This showed how difficult it was to frame words in such a way that men would agree as to their bearing.

Mr. HUME said, he had often complained that the House would never probe the source of the evil of bribery and corruption. He wished to see two plain and simple provisions adopted. Let a clause be passed that any electioneering agent or other person guilty of a dishonourable act, such as contravening the laws, should be punished, and that if he were an attorney he should be struck off the rolls. Then, let every man convicted of receiving a bribe be disfranchised; and if these two clauses were passed, he firmly believed that an end would be effectually put to bribery. He would not trust to any declaration, because he had known instances in which such a form had been subscribed without the party paying much attention to its contents; and he was of opinion that, until his suggestions were adopted, all other efforts to check the evil would be useless.

Mr. HEADLAM regretted that he could not give his support to this Bill. It was impossible not to see that the evils which it sought to suppress, were now considerably less than they were formerly; and he believed that this beneficial change was mainly to be ascribed to the force of that public opinion which had been raised against it, and which could only effectually put an end to the practice. He felt satisfied that this measure would prove utterly inefficient for the purpose for which it would be enacted, and that it would be the means, if passed, of introducing evils almost as serious in their nature as those which it sought to redress, involving, as it would, a distinct violation of the established regulation of criminal justice. Bribery was an offence at common law, and was subject to severe statutory punishment. In addition to that, it was now proposed to punish the party by a perpetual disqualification from sitting in that House, and compelling him also to criminate himself by the proposed declaration. However desirable it might be to suppress the crime of bribery, he did not think it could be done by compelling the party guilty of the act to criminate himself. If they wished to punish the offender, they must have recourse to the ordinary tribunals of the country. He believed that if a measure were passed affixing a moderate punishment to the offence, to be dealt with by the ordinary tribunals, and a public officer were appointed to conduct the prosecutions, as in the case of the Customs or Stamp Office, they would succeed in putting an end to the disgraceful practice.

Mr. SHARMAN CRAWFORD expressed his cordial assent to the principle of the Bill. He could see no principle on which Members should be exempted from a declaration to which the poor electors were subjected. He did not mean to say that the provisions of the Bill were altogether the best that could be framed; but, approving of its principle, he trusted the hon. Baronet would succeed in carrying it into effect.

Mr. F. O'CONNOR said, the discussion showed that the measure of the hon. Baronet the Member for Droitwich would, in the long run, be a sort of conscience refining Bill. He agreed with the hon. and learned Member for Southampton, in thinking that all questions having reference to the criminality of a Member of the House, ought to be decided by a court of law. The hon. Member for Montrose seemed to think that the electioneering agent or attorney ought to be severely punished; but he appeared to forget the just and truthful legal maxim, *Qui facit per alium facit per se.* The hon. and learned Member for Cockermouth had asked whether any hon. Member of that House could lay his hand upon his heart and say that he had never been guilty of bribery; but he (Mr. O'Connor) had stood two severe contests for the county of Cork, and he neither asked any man for his vote, nor would he go to the hustings until his electioneering expenses were paid by the voters. A deputation of publicans of Nottingham had once waited upon him to ask whether, if returned, he would undertake to pay the expenses incurred at the previous election by a right hon. Baronet (the President of the Board of Control), which expenses, including the bribery and corruption of the voters, amounted to at least 20,000*l.* Of course he had declined to comply with the request. He was glad that a distinction had been drawn in the course of the debate between Nottingham as it was and Nottingham as it is, for at the last general election himself and his hon. Colleague had been returned for that borough without either of them knowing that they had even been proposed as candidates. The hon. Member for Coventry (Mr. Turner) had warmly supported the freemen of this country; but the House must permit him to say that he had no confidence in the purity of that body, and he would tell them why. He remembered on one occasion, when he was addressing a crowd of electors from a wagon in the market place, when he deprecated bribery and corruption during the coming election, 500 of the freemen came down in their flannel jackets, and asked him if he was going to destroy their freedom and their inheritance. They made a fierce attack on him in the wagon, and he was obliged to defend himself from their assaults. If the cesspool of election was so muddy as described by some hon. Members, he would purify it by letting in a fresh current. He would extend the franchise, and thus render bribery too expensive a process. He would cordially support the measure.

MR. W. N. HODGSON said, that when the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Cockermouth was a candidate for Carlisle, some years ago, he certainly must have entertained a very different opinion of the constituency from what he did at present. They were then the most liberal and independent of men, and no men had made greater sacrifices for freedom than they had done. But now the hon. and learned Gentleman thought they ought to be disfranchised. Now he would inform the hon. and learned Gentleman, that that constituency contained men as able to judge of political events as any constituency in the country; and against the disfranchisement of such constituencies he should enter his most solemn protest. He would rather forego a seat in that House than be unable to make the declaration contained in the Bill, to which he trusted the House would give a second reading.

SIR J. PAKINGTON, in reply to the arguments that had been adduced in the course of the debate, said, that the principal observation he had to make upon the debate was, that it appeared to him that, excepting those objections which had been made to the principle of Members being called on to make a declaration on this subject, the other objections partook of the nature of verbal criticism rather than serious objection to the Bill. The hon. Baronet then briefly reviewed the objections to his Bill, and concluded by stating that the main principle of the Bill was the security which such a declaration could give against bribery at elections, and called on the House to sanction the second reading of this Bill, reminding them that the eyes of the country were looking to them with some anxiety for a measure which would put an end to the corrupt practices at elections.

COLONEL RAWDON said, that with respect to the observations which had fallen from the hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Henley), upon the subject of declarations made by officers upon obtaining commissions, he begged to state that he had purchased several commissions, but had never been required to make any declaration whatever.

Amendment proposed, "To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'" Question put, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question." The House divided:—Ayes 110; Noes 80: Majority 33.

List of the AYES.

Adair, R. A. S.
Adderley, C. B.
Aglionby, H. A.
Bagshaw, J.
Bailey, J., jun.
Baines, M. T.
Bass, M. T.
Beckett, W.
Berkeley, hon. Capt.
Berkeley, C. L. G.
Birch, Sir T. B.
Boyle, hon. Col.
Brotherton, J.
Bruce, C. L. C.
Busfeild, W.
Butler, P. S.
Buxton, Sir E. N.
Carew, W. H. P.
Cayley, E. S.
Chaplin, W. J.
Clay, J.
Clifford, H. M.
Clive, H. B.
Cochrane, A. D. R. W. B.
Crawford, W. S.
Davie, Sir H. R. F.
Divett, E.
Dod, J. W.
Duckworth, Sir J. T. B.
Duff, G. S.
Duncan, Visct.
Duncan, G.
Duncuft, J.
Egerton, W. T.
Ellis, J.
Ewart, W.
Fergus, J.
Foley, J. H. H.
Fox, W. J.
Glyn, G. C.
Greenall, G.
Greene, J.
Grenfell, C. P.
Grenfell, C. W.
Gwyn, H.
Hanmer, Sir J.
Hardcastle, J. A.
Harris, R.
Hastie, A.
Hawes, B.
Heyworth, L.
Hill, Lord M.
Hood, Sir A.
Howard, Lord E.
Hume, J.
Kershaw, J.
Laey, H. C.
Legh, G. C.
Lincoln, Earl of
Lindsey, hon. Col.
Littleton, hon. E. R.
Lushington, C.
Mahon, Visct.
Marshall, W.
Martin, J.
Matheson, Col.
Mitchell, T. A.
Molesworth, Sir W.
Mulgrave, Earl of
Mullings, J. R.
O'Connell, J.
O'Connor, F.
O'Flaherty, A.
Osborne, R.
Palmer, R.
Pendarves, E. W. W.
Perfect, R.
Pilkington, J.
Pugh, D.
Rawdon, Col.
Ricardo, O.
Rice, E. R.
Rich, H.
Richards, R.
Robinson, G. R.
Rushout, Capt.
Sandars, G.
Scrope, G. P.
Scully, F.
Seymour, H. K.
Slaney, R. A.
Smith, M. T.
Smith, J. B.
Spooner, R.
Stanton, W. H.
Stuart, Lord J.
Talfourd, Serj.
Thicknesse, R. A.
Thompson, Col.
Thornely, T.
Tollemache, J.
Tynte, Col. C. J. K.
Vane, Lord H.
Vivian, J. H.
Walmsley, Sir J.
Ward, H. G.

Wawn, J. T.
Wilson, M.
Wood, W. P.
Wyvill, M.

TELLERS.

Pakington, Sir J.
Cockburn, A. J. E.

List of the NOES.

Anson, Visct.
Anstey, T. C.
Archdall, Capt. M.
Arundel and Surrey, Earl of
Bagge, W.
Bailey, J.
Baring, rt. hon. Sir F. T.
Bennet, P.
Bernard, Visct.
Blackall, S. W.
Blair, S.
Boldero, H. G.
Brisco, M.
Buck, L. W.
Campbell, hon. W. F.
Chichester, Lord J. L.
Christopher, R. A.
Christy, S.
Cowper, hon. W. F.
Craig, W. G.
Dodd, G.
Duncombe, hon. O.
Dundas, Adm.
Dundas, G.
Dunne, F. P.
Du Pre, C. G.
Edwards, H.
Elliot, hon. J. E.
Evans, W.
Farrer, J.
Ferguson, Sir R. A.
Fordyce, A. D.
Fuller, A. E.
Granby, Marq. of
Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.
Hall, Col.
Hamilton, Lord C.
Headlam, T. E.
Heathcote, G. J.
Heneage, G. H. W.
Herbert, H. A.
Hogg, Sir J. W.
Hope, H. T.
Hornby, J.
Howard, hon. C. W. G.
Howard, hon. E. G. G.
Jervis, Sir J.
Jolliffe, Sir W. G. H.
Langston, J. H.
Lascelles, hon. W. S.
Law, hon. C. E.
Lewis, G. C.
Macnamara, Maj.
Magan, W. H.
Maitland, T.
Meux, Sir H.
Miles, P. W. S.
Milnes, R. M.
Monsell, W.
Mure, Col.
Napier, J.
O'Brien, Sir L.
Patten, J. W.
Plowden, W. H. C.
Prime, R.
Rendlesham, Lord
Robartes, T. J. A.
Russell, F. C. H.
Rutherfurd, A.
Sibthorp, Col.
Somerville, rt. hon. Sir W.
Stafford, A.
Stanley, E.
Strickland, Sir G.
Stuart, J.
Tenison, E. K.
Watkins, Col. L.
Wodehouse, E.
Wood, rt. hon. Sir C.
Young, Sir J.

TELLERS.

Turner, G. J.
Henley, J. W.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read 2°, and committed to a Select Committee.

LIGHTHOUSES.

MR. HUME moved an Address for—

"A Copy of the Report of Captain Bayfield, R.N., on the Necessity of Erecting a Lighthouse, on Cape Pine, Newfoundland, and Statement of the Measures that have been adopted by the Government in consequence. Statement of the Progress made in the Erection of the Lighthouse on the Island of Barbadoes, for which the Assembly of Barbadoes has voted Money, and for which, in the Miscellaneous Estimates of last year, the House voted the Sum of 2,000*l*. Also, Statement of what Measures have been adopted respecting the Erection, Management, and Superintendence of Lighthouses in the British Colonies and Possessions."

The hon. Member said, there were not less than 150 lighthouses connected with the colonies, but there was no public officer in this country to whom any application could be made relative to them. Numerous shipwrecks had taken place on the island of Barbadoes, and also on Newfoundland, in consequence of proper precautions not having been taken in the erection of lighthouses. He trusted that the Government would turn their attention to the subject, and see the propriety of nominating some responsible party.

VISCOUNT BERNARD said, the lighthouses nearer home were equally deserving the attention of the Government. During the last winter, many shipwrecks had taken place on the south-western coast of Ireland, principally in consequence of the positions in which the lighthouses were placed. The Ballast Board of Dublin, under whose jurisdiction the lighthouses were placed, possessed large funds; and he trusted the Government would adopt some means by which those funds might be usefully applied, instead of remaining at the bank. Many vessels might have been saved if proper beacons had been placed on some of the most dangerous rocks.

MR. DUNCAN implored the Government to pay attention to the subject of lighthouses, particularly as they were going to make an alteration in the navigation laws.

MR. ANSTEY could confirm the statement of the noble Viscount the Member for Bandon with respect to the working of the present system in Ireland. Some years ago, the Admiralty reported in favour of the erection of a lighthouse on Cable Island, as most convenient for the guidance of vessels entering the port of Youghal and the Cove of Cork. Another site was, however, afterwards chosen, which, although equally useful for Cork, was not convenient for Youghal. Application was made to the Government on the subject, and they showed every inclination to meet the wishes of the inhabitants of Youghal; but the Ballast Board in Dublin was absolute, and the Government had no power to interfere. The consequence was, that a valuable undertaking, which had been commenced by some of the merchants of Youghal, for the establishment of steam communication with Liverpool, was abandoned, it being considered unsafe for those steamers to attempt to enter the port at certain times without the existence of a light on Cable Island.

MR. H. A. HERBERT bore testimony

to the statement of the noble Viscount the Member for Bandon, and trusted that the Government would turn their attention to the subject.

LORD J. RUSSELL said, the subject had very much attracted the attention of his noble Friend lately at the head of the Admiralty (the Earl of Auckland), and was now under the consideration of the Board of Trade. He thought it desirable that the noble Viscount the Member for Bandon, and other hon. Members who possessed practical information on the subject, should state their views, preparatory to legislating on it.

Returns ordered.

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, February 22, 1849.

MINUTES.] *Sat first.*—The Earl Talbot, after the Death of his Father.

PUBLIC BILLS.—2ª Inland Revenue.

3ª and passed:—Conveyance of Real Property Act Amendment.

PETITIONS PRESENTED. By Lord Stanley, from Aberdeen, Middlesbrough, and several other Places, against any Alteration of the Navigation Laws.—From Compton Dando, against any Alteration of the Present Law of Marriage.—From Drogheda, in favour of the Jewish Disabilities Bill.—By the Marquess of Clanricarde, from Drogheda, for the Abolition of Ministers' Money.—By Lord Stanley, from Scariff, against the Present System of Poor Law (Ireland).—From Newport, for the Adoption of Measures for the Suppression of Seduction and Prostitution.—From Theale, against any Measure for the Endowment of the Roman Catholic Priesthood.—By the Earl of Carlisle, from Rawden, and other Places, for the Adoption of such Measures as shall secure to Clergymen Seceding from the Church the full Benefits of the Acts of Toleration.—By the Earl of Oxford, from the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, against the African Slave Trade.—From Oswestry, for the Increase of the Jurisdiction of Local Courts to the Recovery of Debts to the Amount of 50*l.*

CEYLON.

LORD BROUGHAM: I wish to state to your Lordships that the reason, and the only reason, why I do not proceed forthwith to give notice of a Motion on the conduct of the Governor of Ceylon is, that I consider it possible—and I earnestly hope that my anticipation may prove true—that the preceedings on this subject elsewhere will afford an explanation of that conduct; and, if they do not afford such explanation, your Lordships may be called on to deal with the subject in another capacity. Whoever has read the book now on your Lordships' table will be able to comprehend, if he does not share, the feelings which induce me to make this announcement.

THE SLAVE TRADE.

The BISHOP of OXFORD said, he rose for the purpose of moving the appointment, pursuant to the notice which he had given, of a Committee of their Lordships' House, to take into consideration the best means which Great Britain can adopt for providing for the final extinction of the African slave trade. As no opposition would, he believed, be offered to the Motion, it was not his intention to enter at any considerable length into the subject. He was glad to have the cordial support of Her Majesty's Government in making this Motion, but at the same time he thought it was only respectful to their Lordships that he should say a very few words as to the grounds on which he thought it necessary that this Committee should be appointed. He believed that he said no more than what every one would admit to be true, in stating, on the somewhat bare page on which were inscribed high acts and principles, the efforts of Great Britain stood recorded in the brightest colours, for what she had done of late years in this direction in restitution for her long and cruel injustice towards the African race. Her efforts first in putting a stop to the slave trade among her own subjects, and afterwards in the emancipation of the negro population in her West India and other colonies, were praiseworthy, and in a right direction; but he thought it would be admitted that still more was required of her; that as she had carried on the crime herself, and had led other nations, by her fatal example, into partaking of the same great atrocity, she was bound in duty to set an example as marked and decisive in her opposition to slavery as she had before set an example in guilt, and that she should leave no effort untried to induce other nations whom she had led into crime to abandon with her the course of guilt which she had herself left, and to aid her in putting an end to it wherever it prevailed. For this purpose, and with this view, she entered into treaties with other maritime Powers for the establishment of a blockade, by which alone the suppression of the slave trade could be carried into vital effect on the African coast. But the history of this system had reached a new phase. With nations, as with men, it was far easier, in the first impulse of generous sentiment, to effect a great act, than to continue to maintain year after year a great strife against an evil, especially when the struggle is costly, and not in the first instance recommended by any great apparent success. This had been the conduct of Great Britain; but it was, he believed, useless to deny the fact that there had sprung up an apathy in the public mind compared with its state in times past with regard to this question. The press of this country, that so often led, usefully, the public mind, could not be mistaken in the views which it so generally put forward, and it had latterly expressed a certain coldness on the question, and a certain readiness to go back from the position which this country had previously taken, which was far too plain to be mistaken by any unbiassed reader. In this crisis of this great question it seemed incumbent on their Lordships' House to examine carefully into the plan upon which this country had hitherto been acting; that they should closely investigate the objections which were urged against that plan with regard to the alleged impossibility of putting down the slave trade by such means; and that they should arrive at a conclusion as to the wisdom of maintaining the present blockade, or of modifying or altering it so as to render it more efficient. It was in consequence of his conviction of the necessity of some such course as this, that he now moved their Lordships to appoint this Committee. He did so from a conviction in his own mind that the result of that examination must have the effect of convincing them, that without maintaining that blockading squadron, any other measures that they could adopt would be insufficient. But whether any alteration were to be made in the present plan, or whether the blockade were to be maintained just as it was now conducted—these were matters on which it would be for their Lordships to inquire, and with regard to which he should not for the present venture to give an opinion. But this much he would say, that in the evidence that had been obtained in another place, with the exception of the evidence of those who had been themselves engaged in the slave trade, and whose statements were naturally to be viewed with suspicion, there was a remarkable concurrence of opinion with regard to the fact, that just in proportion to the efficacy of that blockading squadron had been the diminution or intermission of the slave trade, and that just in proportion as measures had been taken to render that blockading squadron less effectual, just in the same proportion would the nefarious traffic increase and prosper. There was nothing plainer from the evidence than this, that up to 1840 the blockading squadron had not, in point of fact, been able to carry out its purpose; that, owing to restrictions which prevailed with regard to the right of search south of the equator, and owing to other difficulties, the squadron was able to do very little indeed in effecting the object for which it had been sent out; but that, on the contrary, from 1840 to 1842, the squadron did effect a vast amount of that good for the sake of which England had consented to institute these operations. It appeared from the evidence, that more than half of the vessels engaged in the trade within this period had been captured, and that those who were engaged in the trade had become so disheartened that they were preparing to abandon it altogether as a hopeless undertaking; and it was owing to the misfortune of a misapprehension of the instructions sent out from this country, which misapprehension tended to thwart the officers in command on that station, that this most desirable result had not followed. In consequence of this misapprehension, it was at once imagined that the zeal of England in this cause was flagging; and means were taken to extend the most exaggerated misrepresentations on this point along the coast, so as to make it be believed even that England had determined to reinstitute the slave trade for her own colonies. The trade had, in consequence, sprung up with new vigour; and since that period the number of slaves imported into the Brazils had been even greater than the number imported before that temporary lull to which he had alluded. All this appeared on the face of that evidence; and he desired that their Lordships should appoint the Committee for which he now moved, in order that they might carefully go into the whole question. They would hear all that could be urged on either side, so as to be placed in a position to meet idle objections, if the objections were idle, against a great principle; to listen to valid arguments, if valid arguments could be urged; and to devise such means as it became them to devise, to meet the difficulties with which they had to contend—the greatest, in carrying out their object, which a nation ever bound itself to carry into execution. And just in proportion to his conviction of the comparative apathy which prevailed in the public mind on the question at this moment, was his desire that their Lordships should go carefully into this inquiry; because he was well convinced that that apathy proceeded from no change in the English mind with regard to this great question of the suppression of the slave trade, but was based on other impressions altogether. In point of fact, it was a natural consequence that the minds of men, constituted as they were, should, from the continuance of a great evil, begin gradually to forget the details of the evil. He believed that it had taken many years to arouse the mind of England into a full view of the enormity of those details—that it had taken many years of enduring toil before the greatness of the crime was fully seen; but as soon as it once became fixed on the minds of the people of England, the decision became implanted in their breasts, that no advantage whatever, of a material kind, should induce this country to be mixed up any longer with a system of such enormity. He believed that that feeling was still strong in the minds of the people of England, and that it would be aroused into action again by such an inquiry as that which he demanded, and by having such evidence as that taken in another place brought prominently forward. Could it be otherwise, while they had such facts before them as those stated in that evidence, by the men who were engaged in the traffic, of human beings lying three deep in the holds of vessels while proceeding across the ocean, under the equator—of their being so packed together that it was impossible for them to move from side to side except by a general agreement of the whole deck — of this being their state in the early part of the voyage, until, by attenuation and by deaths, they came to have sufficient room to turn from one side to another as they pleased? And when the witness was then asked, if they did not suffer much from the tossing of the vessel and from thirst, he replied, that they did so at first, but that they soon became so attenuated as to be incapable of suffering from bruises. Whether England will or will not abandon the attempt to prevent such atrocities as these, was a question on which he could entertain no manner of doubt. He was convinced that the reply would be as one voice from the whole country, "Show us if you can that this is the only way, or is a reasonable way, for putting an end to such a frightful system, and no secondary considerations will induce us to refuse our warmest assent to it." This was the question on which he wished their Lordships to inquire. It was with nations as it was in the life of man — it was a fearful thing to decline from high and noble principles, and to take up local and secondary remedies. He wanted them to prevent this great injustice and indignity to so large a proportion of the human race. He trusted that they would not allow the centre of Africa to be filled with rapine, and murder, and bloodshed, in order that the plantations of Brazil might be cultivated with greater facility. He trusted that they would not let these evils be unredressed when God had given them the means, and with the means had given them the charge of preventing it. He therefore thought that it was due, on the part of their Lordships' House, to enter into this inquiry, in order to see whether the existing plan could be effectually carried out before it was abandoned. They were told that the slave trade could be put down by the extension of lawful trade; but those who said so forgot what was the very nature of this traffic. Like all great crimes, it was full of innumerable incidental evils, as well as charged with its own direct iniquity; and it was one of those incidental evils which would continue as long as the slave trade existed, that it would render all lawful traffic absolutely impossible. The two could not exist together. The stronger must destroy the weaker. They had it in the evidence of one of the parties engaged in it, that the slave trade, as it was now conducted, was the most lucrative trade under the sun; and that, so far from there being any tendency in the trade to wear itself out, if it were given time, there was a certainty of the trade continuing if let alone. In proof of this, it was stated that no less than 65,000 slaves had been imported into the Brazils in the year 1846-7, and yet that that vast number by no means met the demand for that particular year. Further, it was stated that there was in Brazil an unlimited amount of fertile soil, which could be brought by slave labour into a state of the most lucrative production. This great importation took place, while the expense of importing slaves was such, that the slaves brought *50l.* a head in Brazil; whereas they had it in evidence that if the trade were thrown open they could bring them across to Brazil at an expense of under *10l.* a head. To suppose that a trade would wear itself out which produced such returns as that, was altogether to forget the deep lust of gain and the great carelessness of life which were found together in those degraded specimens of their common nature which were engaged in that traffic. Therefore he would say, that the slave trade, if left to itself, would go on still more actively than before; that it would render all useful and legitimate trade impossible in Africa, by the cruel and destructive affliction which it maintained in the interior of the continent; and that an unbounded field would be opened for its extension in the cultivation of new lands in the Brazilian territory. There was one subject which he would not more than touch upon at present. It was, that England was now even more bound than before to maintain her efforts for the suppression of this trade, because she was liable to some charge of inconsistency in having stimulated this accursed traffic by opening the British market to slave-grown sugar. Humble as he was, he had not hesitated to declare already before their Lordships his deep conviction that, in applying the doctrine of free trade in this particular case, they were committing one of the greatest instances of encouragement to crime that a nation could be guilty of—that they were suffering themselves to be entangled again in the guilt of that slave trade which they had abolished. From the day when he uttered that opinion in their Lordships' House, he had never seen cause to doubt its truth. Certainly, in the evidence that had been given in another place, the witnesses attributed the great stimulus that had been given to the Brazilian slave trade, to the Sugar Act passed in this country in 1846. Now, he believed that those who brought forward that measure, contemplated that result as little as they could have desired it. He believed further, that the people of England would have cared as little for that miserable penny a pound which they were to save in the price of sugar as he did himself, if they knew that it would have the effect of stimulating the trade for the suppression of which they had already made such sacrifices. But if they carried that measure on grounds which they never ought to have entertained, and in opposition to principles which they had forgotten at the time—if they had forgotten that there were interests which no questions of finance should interfere with, that there were national duties which no economic views should be allowed to set aside—then it became the more essential for them not to flinch now, even though they should subject themselves to increased expense in so doing, in preventing that evil which they had indirectly assisted to increase. Therefore, he would earnestly call upon those who had supported that change in the law to which he alluded, to join with him, to the utmost of their power, in preventing that which seemed to be the natural result of their former legislation; because if, on the one hand, they were to admit slave-grown sugar, to the ruin of their own colonies, in order as they fancied that they might have sugar a trifle cheaper, and if in the next step of their career they shrunk back from the comparatively small expense of maintaining the squadron on the African coast, and thus using their national greatness and national power, as far as the laws of nations allowed, in putting down that accursed traffic, surely they would be following that law which led men step by step from high principles and great sacrifices, down the beaten path to ruin and to sin. Let them look to the breaking up of the great Roman empire for an example. They would see that when that great Power had forsaken its former resolution of defending its colonies from the attacks of barbaric warfare, the wave advanced step by step until it finally overwhelmed the imperial city itself. So it was that he could not doubt that if England, in one such great matter as this, objected to act longer on those high principles that had before influenced her, she could not forsake those principles without meting out for herself some such chastisement as God always held forth against such courses. Already it was whispered abroad that though on one side England was omnipotent by sea, yet that she was baffled on the other by those slavers; that when she could have given the slave trade a blow by burning the barracoons, she desisted, because she would be at the same time burning her own calicoes. Here were their actions measured by others. Those who knew the strength of England could not believe that she was sincere in her opposition to this traffic; they were disabused of the notion of England's omnipotence; and was it not one of the signs by which the decay of nations became known, when they abandoned high grounds and lost the prestige of noble and successful actions? Was it not a sign that such a country was about to assume a second place, instead of the first place among nations? It was because he believed their Lordships were not ready to permit these high principles to be abandoned, and because he felt convinced that the occasional examination of this question would tend to prevent that downward tendency which seemed to threaten the greatness of the country, that he had now to move for the appointment of a Select Committee to consider the best means which Great Britain can adopt for providing for the final extinction of the African slave trade.

The Marquess of LANSDOWNE thought he could almost venture to anticipate that there would not be, on the part of that House or almost any individual in it, a disposition to oppose the Motion which the right rev. Prelate had with so much ability and eloquence offered to their notice. It would be painful indeed in him even to express his assent to the Motion of the right rev. Prelate, if he were to found this assent upon any doubt as to the necessity of convincing the people of England of their duty to maintain with resolution and firmness the course in which the right rev. Prelate had truly stated that they had, upon the highest principles of duty and conscience, been engaged. He did not believe that there had been any alteration in public opinion upon that subject. If there had been any alteration of opinion connected with it, it had not been upon the importance of that duty or the value of those exertions which had been made, effectually or ineffectually, for putting down this trade, but there might have been doubts—unquestionably not as to the duty, not as to the value of the object to be attained, but—as to the efficiency of those methods in which, under treaty with other Powers, and tried by our own desire, we had been engaged for some years past. It was because there had been more or less difference of public sentiment as to the efficacy of those means, that he, for one, thought the Motion of the right rev. Prelate peculiarly well qualified at this time to engage their Lordships' attention; and, without pledging any of their Lordships as to the mode of accomplishing this great duty, to supply the means of a fair and impartial inquiry, giving ample opportunity to those who might think they could make out a case to show that those means had not been as efficient as could be wished, and subjecting them to the test of careful examination. It was first to be ascertained what had been the effect of the means hitherto employed, and whether or not those means could be made more effectual; but they should not lose sight of the great duty incumbent upon them—that by some means or other this nefarious traffic, if it were within the power of this country to accomplish, should be effectually put down. New facts had certainly come to light, and fresh experience been afforded on this subject. Steam navigation had introduced a new element into the consideration of the subject, and the amount of force to be employed on the African coast ought to form a main object of the inquiry by the Committee, which he trusted would be an impartial guide both to their Lordships, the other House of Parliament, and the Government. If we were to be baffled in our exertions, he agreed with the right rev. Prelate that it would lower this country in the scale of nations from that high position she had hitherto proudly occupied, by setting herself, with all her efforts and all her influence on other countries, both as regarded her own dominions and those of her allies, to extinguish, if it could be extinguished, this detestable and nefarious traffic.

The Earl of ABERDEEN should not have troubled their Lordships with any words on this occasion, seeing the universal assent of the House to this Motion, had it not been for the reference made by the right rev. Prelate to certain instructions sent by Her Majesty's Government (those instructions having emanated from himself whilst holding the office of Secretary for Foreign Affairs), which the right rev. Prelate said had been misunderstood, and had consequently produced injurious effects. First, let him say, he was extremely happy that this inquiry should be instituted; because he considered that the main object of the Committee would be to inquire into the efficiency of that great step which had been taken in the increase of the force employed on the coast of Africa for the suppression of the slave-trade. He considered himself to be responsible, mainly responsible, for those means which were now employed. When he came into office, in the year 1841, he found 800 or 900 men employed upon the coast; when he quitted office, in 1846, he left 3,000 men employed upon the coast. Consequently he was more interested, possibly, than any of their Lordships, in examining correctly and ascertaining what the real efficiency was of the squadron employed on the coast; and how that efficiency, if it were practicable, might be augmented. The instructions to which the right rev. Prelate had referred arose from the zeal of officers employed upon the coast in destroying the slave depôts, or barracoons, in which not only slaves were confined, but merchandise, belonging as well to British subjects as those of foreign Powers. It had been found necessary on two or three occasions to make compensation, under the direction of the law officers of the Crown, to subjects of France and America, for merchandise belonging to subjects of those Powers which had been destroyed by our cruisers. The letter of which the right rev. Prelate spoke was never intended to be published; it was addressed to the Admiralty, with the view of having it communicated to the officers employed on the coast, and to the end that they should be instructed in the careful execution of their duty. It informed them that they were not authorised to destroy merchandise on the coast, unless they had the sanction of the chiefs in employing those means for the repression of the slave trade. For great as was the object before them, and earnestly as they should strive to accomplish that which this country had so long pursued, depend upon it we should lose much if, in doing so, we violated those laws of nations by which we were bound to order our proceedings. Having been obliged to accede to the demands of the French and American Governments in two or three instances, it was thought highly necessary to warn officers in Her Majesty's service as to the line of conduct they should follow. There was a mistake into which persons were very apt to fall, as the right rev. Prelate had done this evening, of calling the watch kept upon the coast a blockade. A blockade was a belligerent measure, which, whilst it gave rights, imposed duties; but our police measures on the African coast were not properly a blockade. That the publication of the letter to which he alluded might have produced injurious effects, he readily believed. He feared such had certainly been the case; at the same time he had no doubt that the effect had been greatly exaggerated. At the time of the publication of that letter the trade did not exist to more than one-third its present amount. He would recall to the recollection of the House that, in regard to the squadron, we were not free agents, because we were bound by treaty with France to preserve a certain amount of force, and, until we were released from the obligations of that treaty, we could not even make any alteration, if it should be thought necessary or desirable. It was probable certainly that Her Majesty's Government might not find the same difficulty in obtaining a diminution of the force from the French Government which he himself had in procuring the acceptance of the terms of the treaty, for he really believed that such was the want of feeling in France upon this subject, that perhaps no man but the bold and virtuous Minister then at the head of the French Government would have ventured into such a treaty with this country. In fact, his doing so very nearly occasioned his overthrow, for the universal hostility of the French journals and orators in the Chambers was to such as to make it difficult for the French Government of the day to maintain their places. Fortunately for them, he (the Earl of Aberdeen) was exposed to similar attacks in this country; but they were so miserable in their kind as to be of very little consequence, and to the sensible portion of both countries the names of the Duc de Broglie and Dr. Lushington were ample guarantees that while the interests of humanity would be consulted, the true interests of neither country would suffer any detriment.

Lord STANLEY said, he would not detain the House but for a very few moments, and with a very few remarks. He concurred in the strong desire expressed by the right rev. Prelate for the final extinction of the detestable traffic in slaves. He concurred, too, with the noble Marquess and the right rev. Prelate in thinking that the present was the fitting time in which might be devised the most efficacious means that could be resorted to, for the suppression of the slave trade; but whilst he agreed with his noble Friend who had just sat down that it was a proper point to inquire whether effectual means had been resorted to on the coast of Africa, by the squadron employed on that coast, for the suppression of slavery, still he thought that the Committee would fall far short of its duty if it shrunk from an inquiry into the causes which impeded its efficiency, and the obstacles which that squadron had to encounter, and the difficulties that had been thrown in its way. He thought this was a matter of very great importance; and he trusted that the Committee would direct a careful examination upon the progress made—the stages of advance and of retrogression that attended the labours of the squadron. He trusted that the Committee would take into consideration that which had been adverted to by his noble Friend—the state of the traffic in the year 1840—the gradual and direct success that followed that period—and the greater efficiency of the squadron between the years 1840 and 1846. He trusted, however, that the inquiries of the Committee would not stop there; but that whilst they traced with a fearless hand the comparative state of affairs from 1840 to 1846, they would report not only upon the facts themselves, but also upon their causes and their consequences—the fact that there was an increase in the slave trade, notwithstanding the vigilance of their squadron—the fact that there was an increase in the amount of the traffic in slaves, and an increase in the horrors of the mode by which it was carried on, from the year 1846 to 1849. His opinion had been often stated on this subject, and he did not hesitate to repeat it — namely, that whilst he gave every credit to the Government for the measures resorted to by them relative to the squadron on the coast of Africa, he also believed, at the same time, that whilst they increased the amount of the squadron for the purpose of putting down the traffic, they had been guilty of a most unhappy inconsistency that more than neutralised all their efforts, by giving an increased stimulant to the slave trade, and increasing the facilities by increasing the motives for carrying it on; and this they had done by the alterations they had been induced to make, upon the wretched plea of a most mistaken economy, by the alteration of the sugar duties. Up to 1846 the measures taken by the Government, of which his noble Friend (the Earl of Aberdeen) and himself had been Members, had been attended with success. Their energetic efforts had had a corresponding result. He doubted much that Her Majesty's present Government could point to their efforts as being attended with equal success. He had no doubt that their efforts were equally sincere and equally energetic, but still there was no progressive decay in the slave trade from 1846 to 1849; and he trusted that the Committee which was now about to be appointed would deem it to be their duty to point out what had been the causes during that period of an increase in the slave trade. The officers were as zealous, the crews more numerous, the service as well performed, in the one period as in the other; and yet the fact was—if it was a fact—that not only the slave trade had increased, but there was also this melancholy reflection for every friend of humanity, that every increased effort to suppress the slave trade had not produced the slightest diminution in the number of slaves, but it had increased the supply of persons to be sold as slaves, and by this cause a far greater number of unhappy persons were exposed to still greater hardships, and to much greater horrors, and to far more afflicting sufferings, than any they had been subjected to previous to the intervention of the squadron on the coast at all. The right rev. Prelate had pointed distinctly to the year 1846, when he stated that not less than 60,000 slaves were landed on the coast of Brazil under circumstances of increased and aggravated horrors. The right rev. Prelate had not taken that year without a just cause. He trusted that the Committee would direct its inquiries as to the events of 1846, and their effect in increasing the import and sufferings of slaves; and whether in the years 1847 and 1848 there had not been an increase both in the import and sufferings of slaves, notwithstanding the enormous expenditure in money and in life made by the British Government on the coast of Africa; and whether that Government did not exhibit itself to this country and to the world with an appearance, he would not say, of hypocrisy, because he did not believe there was hypocrisy—but if they did not exhibit themselves as manifesting a gross, grave, and glaring inconsistency by attempting to put down the slave trade by their squadron on the one hand, and of upholding it by their fiscal measures on the other. This Committee should see whether, with a sincere desire on the part of the Government to represent and co-operate with the feelings of the people to put down the slave trade, they did not by their fiscal regulations increase that very slave trade of which they had given the proof it was their desire to put down.

EARL GREY remarked, that the speech of the noble Lord who had just sat down, was a striking specimen of the value that ought to be attached to his opinions. The noble Lord's speech was a characteristic specimen of the impetuosity with which he would come to a judgment upon the matter submitted to him; and, certainly, if the noble Lord were placed upon the Committee about to be appointed, the speech which he had just delivered would very greatly diminish the value of any opinion which he might arrive at. Their Lordships were about to appoint a Committee — that Committee was to inquire into facts; and yet the noble Lord, in his extreme impatience to pronounce sentence, and in his burning desire to deliver himself of his philippic, could not be at ease until he had rid himself of his pent-up feelings; and, therefore, did, in a manner which was quite characteristic of the noble Lord, tell them that Ministers had been guilty of a monstrous inconsistency—taking that facts were as he stated—although he added, to use his own expression, "if they be facts." The noble Lord declaimed against Her Majesty's Government for the policy they had pursued, and the effects that followed from a certain state of facts—that is, as he said, if the facts be so and so. He thought that this mode of proceeding did not confer any great honour on their Lordships' House. He thought that when they had determined to appoint a Committee to make an inquiry, it would be well to wait until that inquiry had been made before an opinion was expressed. He said to the noble Lord that if he desired to make an attack on Her Majesty's Government, he ought to adopt a more straightforward and manly course of attack—that the noble Lord ought to make it in such a manner as that he might be enabled to take the opinion of the House on the subject. He was in no degree shaken in the opinion which he originally entertained with respect to the measure of 1846; he believed that, apart from all other considerations, it was a wise measure, and that it would ultimately tend to the extinction of the slave trade and slavery. He was confident that this would be the real result of the measure when it came to be developed; and so he believed it to be understood by the House and the country, notwithstanding the taunts of the noble Lord. Whenever the question came to be regularly discussed, neither he nor his Colleagues would shrink from it. But when they were about to institute an inquiry of this kind; when the object they had in view was one of the greatest importance; and when there was an honest desire to extirpate the slave trade, and the only question was, as to the means by which that could be attained; when they were only concerned with this point, and when they were going into an inquiry as to the manner in which that object might be attained, it was not for Her Majesty's Government to look to any other subject, and it was not for any noble Lord to take upon himself to cast out taunts and reflections such as those in which he had indulged. He wished also to refer to a circumstance that had occurred in the early part of the evening, and with regard to which he had some reason to complain. In consequence of Her Majesty's levee, and of a meeting of the Cabinet that followed, he was not able to be there until twenty minutes after the House met, and yet, when he arrived, he found that a noble and learned Lord (Lord Brougham) had, in his absence, although told he was coming down to the House, thought fit to make remarks when he was not there relative to the affairs of Ceylon. He had not heard what were the remarks that the noble and learned Lord had made. All he could say was this—that he protested against the noble and learned Lord, without due notice, adopting any means which were likely to prejudice their Lordships' minds. Let the noble and learned Lord, if he desired to censure any proceedings of theirs, do it in such a manner as that the attack and the defence might be heard. Let the noble and learned Lord give due notice of his vote of censure. He (Earl Grey) was there, and so were his Colleagues, and they, he said, were prepared to defend what had taken place. Not only did he not shrink from an encounter with the noble and learned Lord, but he was ready to meet it, and would even consider it as a favour conferred upon him, if the noble and learned Lord called upon their Lordships to pronounce an opinion on the subject to which he had adverted. But it was most unjust to a noble Lord who was a servant of the Crown, and who was filling a most arduous post in a distant province; and it was most unjust to Her Majesty's Government, who were responsible for the acts of the noble Lord—it was, he said, most unjust, as well as most irregular, for a noble and learned Lord to cast out carping reflections implying blame upon that noble Lord and the Government, as he understood the noble and learned Lord had done in commenting upon their proceedings, and this, too, in a manner which did not admit of any answer being made to them.

Lord BROUGHAM said, he had not any intention of interfering in this debate but for the remarks that had just fallen from the noble Earl, and which he thought their Lordships must have heard with some surprise. But for these remarks he would have allowed an unopposed Motion to be put to the vote, and carried without a division. This he would have done without any observation but for what the noble Earl had just said. If he had any reason to doubt what the noble Earl had stated—namely, that he was not present when a few observations were made by himself (Lord Brougham), the proof was afforded that the noble Earl was not present, by the remarks in which he had just indulged. The noble Earl alluded not to a fact, but a fancy, and was indignant at imaginary remarks that had never been made by him, or by any other human being. If the noble Earl had been in his place, he would have known that what he (Lord Brougham) had said amounted to a general notice, and that it was a notice, not for a discussion at a short date, but a deferred notice on account of a pending debate in another House. He had made no remarks, he had entered into no discussion; but perhaps it would be better for him to repeat what he had said. He must apologise to their Lordships in general for making them hear again what he had said before. To the noble Earl no apology was due; for to him these remarks must have the charm of novelty. To such of their Lordships as only took their notion of his remarks from the noble Earl's statement, apology was still less due, for they were put by the noble Earl in a state worse than being uninformed; they were left by that statement altogether misinformed. He had said that he abstained for the present from submitting to their consideration the conduct of the Governor of Ceylon—he made no reference whatever to the noble Earl. His reason for abstaining from making any observation was, that proceedings had taken place elsewhere, which might possibly, and he fervently hoped would, end in an explanation of that conduct. That surely was not a very prejudiced view to take of the subject. He had said, further, that if the inquiry did not end in a satisfactory explanation, that was an additional reason for his not broaching it to their Lordships, as they might peradventure be called upon in the discharge of their other functions to decide upon it; and he added that whoever had read the blue book that was before them would understand, if he did not share in, the feeling which impelled him to give that notice of the subject to which, under such circumstances, he adverted. He believed those were the very words that he had used, and which he then repeated to their Lordships. If neither event happened, then only should he be obliged to bring forward the subject of his general notice. And as the noble Earl said that he would allow him — which indeed the noble Earl could not prevent — but that he (the noble Earl) would deem it a favour if he brought forward a Motion on this subject—he said to the noble Earl, "Don't be uneasy; for that is a favour which, if I be spared, shall be conferred upon the noble Earl." As to the noble Earl not being present when he gave the notice, wishing him to be present, he had waited until he saw the right rev. Prelate about to bring forward his Motion, which he expected might lead to a long debate, to the conclusion of which he should not be able to remain, having engagements elsewhere; and therefore he had no choice but to give the notice previous to the commencement of the debate. While he was addressing their Lordships, let him say one word upon the Motion of the right rev. Prelate. For himself, he felt no occasion for further inquiry, but others had to be satisfied. It was to be borne in mind that besides the Parliament and the Executive Government, there was the country to satisfy upon the question. He entirely agreed in every word which had fallen from the noble Lord behind him (Lord Stanley)—he was quite prepared to avow the same opinions to which he had given utterance; but that would not preclude him from going into the Committee without the slightest bias upon his mind. The noble Earl had said, that his noble Friend (Lord Stanley), with his characteristic impetuosity, had given an opinion, which he had long entertained, one which he had never ceased to maintain, that the alteration of the sugar laws and the increase of the slave trade were intimately and closely connected. It was a fact which could not be controverted. The facts bore out all the most gloomy predictions of himself and his noble Friend (Lord Stanley) in 1846 as to the increase of the horrors of the slave trade being closely allied with the legislation of that year. When the noble Earl talked of impetuosity—but he was in a mood to confer a favour—he had already promised one to the noble Earl, he would then confer another without a promise. The noble Earl might suppose he had been bitter on his noble Friend; but all he said was an eulogy upon him. When the noble Earl spoke about the personal characteristics of his noble Friend, why really there was nothing could be said more complimentary than to pronounce that a man spoke and acted characteristically, as it showed at least consistency. No doubt his noble Friend took it as it was meant—eusense! You, France, dine with me to-day, and I, England, claim your hospitality to-morrow. The visit of the National Guard Citizens of France may now be returned by nobles, gentry, merchants, tradesmen, and yeomen of our own land. Then will this national deputation, abandoning their domesticity for the attraction of a new hospitality, infuse the intellectuality of civilisation into the friendliness of a national regard. With these prefatory remarks, we now announce, that England returns to France her visit of citizenship. For the purpose of making it complete, effective, and in harmony with the circumstances of the times, we know that, while the higher classes will of course preserve the dignity of their position, and while the merchant classes will be prepared for the exercise of their accustomed liberality, yet that our compliment to France would be comparatively nullified, and in no wise accord with the spirit of universality which now belongs to the French Constitution, if the simply competent did not accompany the rich—if there were not, in fact, a certain fraternisation of classes, and the presence of those who will seek to limit the expense of the journey of compliment they are prepared to undertake. To meet this contingency, the association, which has commenced the necessary organisation of the visit, has ventured upon the responsibility of blending with it some commercial considerations—for those who find it really necessary to put business into the pocket of pleasure—and with this significant intimation the English public is now directed to the carefully weighed outlines, in the spirit of which the arrangements will be eventually carried out. Besides the impulse of national generosity—the genial glow of fellowship—the dignity and worth of the occasion, and the principles of peace and commerce, of which it will go far to link the chain—there are personal vanities, and spurs, and promises of happiness and entertainment—the honour of going with the association—the economy of seeing everything for nothing. Nor will the mercantile man and the commercial traveller fail to throng the list of candidates. One will say, 'Hospitality engenders conviviality, and conviviality, business; and if I can saddle these upon the horse of pleasure, it will be an honourable sort of *carpe diem*:'—the other will exclaim, 'I go as an item in the general nationality, I partake the compliment, the applause, and it may so happen that I may bring home with me the spring fashions of the young republic.' Enough has been said to indicate that this visit will be, though large in numbers, at least select in the character of the visitors. Ladies shall be provided with proper escort. That stewards may be appointed, for the purposes of classing together, as far as may be practicable, those visitors who may already have an acquaintance with each other, so as to give to the visit the freedom of a number of friendly parties, the management have pleasure in announcing that they have secured the valuable assistance of Mr. Joseph Crisp, who has had great practical experience in similar undertakings."

This being the invaluable, the amusing programme of the proceedings, he begged to ask the hon. Under Secretary, as it purported to be "registered under Act of Parliament," whether he were aware if this was this case; or whether, as might be reasonably supposed, the whole affair was a hoax?

Mr. CORNEWALL LEWIS said, he must confess his entire ignorance of the whole matter till his attention was called to it by the hon. Member. He knew nothing of the particulars which the hon. Gentleman had detailed to the House; but, as far as he could follow the extracts which were read, whatever might be thought of the wisdom of forming such an association, it seemed to be formed for quite innocent objects, and not requiring to come in any way under the observation of the Home Office.

Mr. BROWN rose and said: As I am one of the Members— [*Loud cries of* Order!"]

Mr. WYLD said, in order to have an opportunity of explaining the matter, he would move the adjournment of the House.

Mr. BROWN seconded the Motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member move the adjournment of the House, he must show good cause why the House should adjourn. He must not speak upon other questions while moving the adjournment of the House.

Mr. WYLD trusted that under the circumstances the House would excuse him for a moment.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must remark that I would not allow the hon. Member for Bridport to put his question to individual Members. I could not prevent him putting his question to a Minister; but it is against the rules of Parliament to put questions to individual Members not connected with the business of this House.

Subject at an end.

VICE-ADMIRALTY COURTS.

Captain PECHELL rose to ask the Secretary for the Admiralty what steps had been taken to reform the proceedings in the several Vice-Admiralty Courts, and to remedy the complaints made last Session of the gross abuses that had taken place at St. Helena, Sierra Leone, Cape of Good Hope, and Sydney, New South Wales?

Mr. WARD said, that the subject was one of considerable difficulty, the facts being anything but clear. There were two subjects of complaint: the one was the high scale of fees charged in the courts, and the other was the practice of making extraordinary charges. It was found that the remedy of the first grievance lay entirely with the Lords of the Admiralty, who had the power of ordering a new scale of fees, and that was now in course of preparation. With regard to the other grievance, of overcharges, the difficulty lay in the fact that they could only be remedied by appeal to England, and then it became necessary to get sworn copies of the whole proceedings, which was attended with considerable expense. The Admiralty had been in consultation with Sir Stephen Lushington upon the subject, and they had now instructed the Vice-Admiralty Courts to send home the whole of the papers in every case; this would greatly facilitate appeals in future, and he trusted that it would be found a sufficient remedy.

MR. HUME said, in New South Wales the abuses of the court had risen to such a height that the Supreme Council had passed an ordinance to check them. What he wished to know was, whether the Government intended to give their sanction to that ordinance; but as no Member of the Government was present who could answer the question, he would on some future occasion again put the question.

THE LAW OF MARRIAGE.

MR. STUART WORTLEY then rose to ask leave to bring in a Bill to amend and alter the Act of 5th and 6th William IV., c. 54, so far as relates to marriage within certain degrees of affinity. He was sensible not only of the extreme difficulty, but of the extreme delicacy of the subject, and if he consulted only his own feelings he should have abstained altogether from bringing it forward. But he had from time to time been made aware of the extremity and extent of the grievances arising under the present state of the law, and of the extent to which it affected the morals of the people, and he did not feel himself fully at liberty, in consequence, to decline the task imposed upon him. For there was a claim upon him more than upon other Members of the House, in consequence of those complaints having been sanctioned by one whose memory he most deeply revered. In 1841 the subject had been introduced into the House of Lords by a revered relative of his; and he (Mr. S. Wortley) had himself investigated the matter closely and carefully, in order to see whether he could come to the same resolution, having at first, he was willing to confess, an impression which he admitted might be called a prejudice against the measure. And it was not until after the most careful and mature deliberation that he had ventured at last to bring the question before Parliament. In the year 1842 a noble Lord, then a Member of that House, he meant the Earl of Ellesmere, than whom there was not a more true and faithful adherent of the Church, nor a man to be found who held Church authority in higher respect, introduced the question to the notice of the House. Upon that occasion the House refused to grant his noble Friend the leave he asked. But the noble Lord received so much support as to lead him to believe that the discussion of the subject more prominently before the public mind—that further and fuller discussion would take place, which would lead to inquiry, and the result of which would create a demand for alteration. The facts that had been elicited were those principally on which he (Mr. S. Wortley) had founded his present Bill. Since the discussion in 1842 the position of the question had been altered, with respect to the doubts as to the legality of these marriages. There were two classes of these marriages—those celebrated abroad, and those celebrated in this country. The doubt about the legality of marriages within the prohibited degrees, was removed by a decision of the Court of Queen's Bench, which was to the effect that marriages between persons within the prohibited degrees of affinity were absolutely null and void. The law, therefore, was found to affect all classes. It affected the legitimacy of parties, and the descent of property. There were some cases in which the marriages had been celebrated abroad; some between persons resident and domiciled there; others between persons who escaped there from the stringency of the law of this country. Those marriages still continued, and showed the necessity which existed for still further inquiry by Parliament. Since the Motion which had been made by the Earl of Ellesmere, they had had many proofs that the law, far from being more efficient in its effect for the prevention of those marriages—far from having tended to the improved morality of the people—had been extensively evaded by them. It had in some cases been avoided, in some it had proved a snare for the lower classes. It had led to perjury, he meant such perjury as was involved in the giving of misdescription, in the denial of the actual truth; and in other instances it had led to concubinage where the parties cohabited together without the ceremony of marriage. It had, in short, tended to the production of immorality amongst the lower classes. It was not until a very late hour of the day that he had received an intimation that he would not be opposed at the first stage of his Motion; and that there would be no division taken upon the question of leave being given to bring in the Bill. If that were so he would be happy to relieve the House from a great portion of the detail which he would otherwise have thought it necessary to lay before it. But he still would be obliged to state as shortly as possible a history of the restrictions imposed in those cases to which he more particularly referred, and the substance of the report of the Commission presented to the House a year and a half ago, and which report was then lying on the table. It had been said that this report was the production of parties who had a preconceived opinion on the question. This was answered by the evidence of the papers before them, and by the extensive correspondence which had arisen. That Commission was appointed in consequence of various petitions that had been presented to the House, some of them from parties interested in the question—others from individuals not interested, except from seeing the evils to which the law had led—and others still from a considerable body of the clergy of the Established Church. It was said, upon that occasion, that those petitions were not very numerous. But it was a peculiar and difficult question. It was one from the discussion of which people shrunk, and one upon which people were unwilling to put themselves forward. But this much had been ascertained from the book before him, and from the extensive correspondence that had taken place, that the complaints, if not loud, were deep and general, and that a great body of the people of this country were interested in obtaining the relief which he (Mr. S. Wortley) wished to give. The Commission was granted "to inquire into the state and operation of the law of marriage, as relating to the prohibited degrees of affinity, and to marriages solemnised abroad, or in the British colonies;" and he was justified, he believed, in saying, that with the exception of the humble individual who was addressing the House, there could not have been selected a list of names more fully entitled to command confidence than that of the persons chosen to constitute the Commission. At the head was a right rev. Prelate, of the highest character in the Church (the Bishop of Lichfield); next was Dr. Lushington, who was second to no man in authority upon matters connected with ecclesiastical law; the next was his lamented friend, Mr. Blake, the late Chief Remembrancer of Ireland, a member of the Roman Catholic body, and one who commanded their highest confidence and consideration; then came Justice Vaughan Williams, and his right hon. Friend opposite, the Lord Advocate (Mr. Rutherfurd), whose knowledge of the law of marriage in Scotland was most extensive; and of all those Commissioners, with the exception of himself (Mr. S. Wortley), who had expressed his opinion in the House, there was not one who had come to a definite conclusion, or who had made up his mind upon the subject. They all came to the consideration of the question with minds perfectly open to conviction upon it. They, in their report, recommended no particular plan or measure, for this reason, that the Commission did not entitle them nor authorise them to do more than inquire into the state and operation of the law; and they therefore felt themselves not at liberty to do more than report upon that subject. But he apprehended that no man could read that report, and the conclusion to which it came, without being convinced that there could have been no member of the Commission who was not prepared to say that some alteration was necessary for the purpose of relaxing the restrictions of the law—restrictions that could not be justified to those Commissioners, who were men of high station in the Church—of high station in the law, and of high character in private life. In proposing a measure of that kind, he thought it wise to confine himself to the actual grievance that existed. He wished not to set afloat questions that were unnecessary, nor to enter into wide controversies. He should, therefore, confine the proposition he had to make to the only two cases which seemed of importance during the inquiry. They were—marriage with the sister of a deceased wife, and marriage with the niece of a deceased wife. These two stood pretty much in the same category. The measure he should propose was merely a permissive one. There was nothing compulsory in it. The marriage of two brothers with two sisters had been formerly prohibited. They were subsequently permitted, and there was no reason for supposing that the number of such marriages had increased in consequence. Neither was there any reason to suppose that such marriages as he now proposed to legalise would be more numerous in consequence of such permission. Up to the year 1835 those marriages were practically permitted. He said "practically," because although, no doubt, they were not legally permitted, yet there was little or no danger of their being invalidated; and, except in some occasional cases of malice, there was not the slightest probability of their being disturbed. And for many years before the appointment of the Commission, those marriages had been celebrated in every rank of life. Less numerously, probably, amongst the wealthy and those in high station, but in greater number amongst the poor, whose obscurity and poverty prevented them from being interfered with. It was remarkable, that during the long period that those marriages so existed, they had heard no complaints about them. No restrictions were sought to be put upon them, and he was justified in saying, that there was no very extensive horror of them in the public mind. It was not until one of them occurred in the very highest rank of life, that they became noticed, and it was no blame to anybody to say that that event immediately attracted public attention. But, instead of the Legislature stepping forward to point it out to reprobation, an application was made to the Legislature, and with the consent of both Houses of Parliament, including the heads of the Church, the sanction of the law was given to that marriage. It was not said to be a valid one, but all chance of invalidating it was taken away by Lord Lyndhurst's Act. The question, therefore, was not whether these were desirable marriages. The question was, whether they had a right to prevent them. He thought their principle ought to be to give every facility for marriage. That was the principle of the law of England. And he therefore apprehended that those restrictions could only be justified by the fact that those marriages were forbidden by the law of God, or in consequence of some public overwhelming necessity. Now, with respect to the law of God, he would not venture upon that part of the subject at that stage. He would avoid all discussion upon it, as he found there was to be no division upon that stage of his Motion. He would also pass over the question as it related to the condition of the subject. But perhaps it would be as well for him to explain to the House, for the information of those hon. Members who might not have had time to investigate the matter for themselves, how the question had arisen. With respect to the prohibition in general, there was no certainty that it existed amongst the early Christians. He should say no more than that its origin was extremely doubtful, and almost lost in obscurity. It defied the investigation of the most learned men. On the authority of Michaelis, it was alleged not to have been forbidden; but that, on the contrary, it was practised during the early ages of Christianity. During the three first centuries of Christianity, there was no mention of its prohibition. It was not until the fourth century that it was prohibited. It was prohibited by what were called the Apostolic Canons, not the Canons of the Apostles, but still of high authority in the Church; and by the Council of Eliberis in 305; but by neither was it declared to be contrary to the law of God. During the fourth and fifth centuries the councils condemned those marriages, and afterwards, during the corruption of the middle ages, came councils and canons innumerable condemning them, but in company with many more which had since been established as perfectly legal and within the permission of the law of God. It therefore became perfectly settled in canon law that these marriages were prohibited; but the grounds of the prohibition rested principally, he believed, upon a letter of St. Basil, which had been referred to in another place. St. Basil, who was the founder of the Eastern Church, and the founder of the monastic order of that church, in the fourth century, entered into a controversy with another bishop of the Christian church, who, as appeared from St. Basil's letter, differed from him upon the subject of those marriages. But the prohibition had, at all events, been established from time to time, from the fourth and fifth centuries, down to the time of the Reformation. The canon law had been introduced into England. It formed no part of the law of England, except so far as it had been grafted upon the statute law; but undoubtedly it had been so grafted upon the law of England, that the law said, if such a marriage be contracted, it should stand good during the life of the parties; but if the ecclesiastical law annulled it, then the statute law of England acknowledged that annulling. He should not endeavour to trace, as he should have have done had his Motion been opposed, the origin of the canons, and the origin of or motives for the prohibition of those marriages. But he should observe, that after the authority of Rome had been established in this country, there came with it, necessarily, all the canons of the Roman Church. Such was the state of the law until the reign of Henry VIII. At the time of the Reformation, those marriages had been forbidden down to the Council of Trent. But they had been dispensed by the Roman Catholic Church from time to time, and it was in consequence of that power of dispensation Henry VIII. was enabled to espouse Catharine of Arragon, who was the widow of his brother. Henry obtained a dispensation from the Pope in order to marry Catharine, and that dispensation was granted upon the grounds that such marriages were not forbidden by the law of God, but only by the canon law. And afterwards, when Henry VIII. was about to marry Anna Boleyn, and it became necessary to get rid of the marriage with Catharine, the famous discussion took place which ended by Cranmer, on the part of Henry, obtaining the majority of opinions from the universities of Europe and of this country in favour of such marriages being forbidden by the law of God, and that they, in consequence, could not be dispensed. Upon the Reformation taking place, Cranmer undertook to reduce the canon law to something like a code, and drew up the *Reformatio Leges*. He had been the principal means of invalidating the marriage of Henry with Catharine, for the purpose of enabling Henry to marry Anna Boleyn. The validity of Anna Boleyn's marriage depended upon the doctrine that such a marriage as that of Catharine's was contrary to the law of God; and the legitimacy and right of Elizabeth to the throne depended equally upon that doctrine. It was not to be supposed, therefore, that under these circumstances Cranmer would have omitted to introduce this particular prohibition into the code he drew up in the reign of Elizabeth. Archbishop Parker had been brought up, or, at least, he had been protected by Cranmer, and he was recalled by Queen Elizabeth from exile. He shared with Cranmer in his views, and in the necessity of establishing the invalidity of the marriage of Henry with Catharine. To establish that upon which the legitimacy of Elizabeth depended, the prohibition of those marriages became absolutely necessary; and, under those circumstances it was that the table of prohibitions was drawn up by Archbishop Parker, in 1603, which was now hung up in all churches in this country, and was sometimes added to the Book of Common Prayer. It was universally acknowledged, however, that that table formed no part of the Book of Common Prayer—a fact that could not be too widely known. It was merely bound up with it for convenience. The law continued to be administered in this country much in the same way after the Reformation as it had been before it, with this exception, that whereas before the Reformation there existed a power of dispensation which greatly mitigated the evils arising from those prohibitions, after it that power was given up; for, although by an Act—21 Henry VIII.—the power of dispensing was transferred from the Pope to the Archbishop of Canterbury, a dispensation by the Archbishop from canonical regulations was unknown; it had scarcely ever been exercised, and the practice had become obsolete. The consequence was, that those restrictions which were dispensed with in the Roman Catholic Church, became absolute and indispensable in this country, and the ecclesiastical courts, except when called upon, which was very rarely, avoided those marriages altogether. At length the ecclesiastical courts having entertained the question of the validity of those marriages after the death of the parties, necessarily illegitimising the children after the death of the parties, the common law courts interfered, and prevented the ecclesiastical courts from invalidating such marriages at all when even one only of the parties was dead. The result was, that a law was passed, declaring what marriages were void, and what were voidable merely. Marriages of consanguinity were declared void, and marriages of affinity only voidable if during the life of the parties a suit were instituted for the purpose. Marriages which were merely, so far as their morality was concerned, matters of opinion, came under the latter category. Those which were contrary to the known will of God, as contained in the pages of revelation, were included in the first. Such a state of the law was very anomalous, and it led to grievous cruelty. It made such marriages almost always lawful, except where property or right was concerned—as in cases where estates were entailed, and in some of those the greatest hardship was at times inflicted. He would mention one instance given by Dr. Lushington, before whom it had come. The suit was instituted after the parties had been married upwards of thirty years, and eight children had been born to them, and when the father was very advanced in age. Then it was that the opportunity was taken by a malicious relative to invalidate the marriage, and the ecclesiastical court was obliged to annul it. The children were illegitimised, and the whole family, after the father's death, were thrown into the greatest poverty. Yet, deep as the injury inflicted by the law was felt to be, it was not until the marriage within the restricted degrees took place in a very high station of life, that it was publicly noticed. It was for the purpose of providing a remedy that Lord Lyndhurst's Bill was passed, and they had it on the authority of that noble and learned Lord, expressed in the case of the Duke of Sussex's Bill, that he never intended by it to prevent a marriage with a deceased wife's sister. Lord Lyndhurst's object was to establish the legality of all such marriages which had been contracted up to that time, and to provide that as respects such marriages in future they should not be invalidated if they had existed for two years. This was the object of Lord Lyndhurst's Bill as introduced; but it was proposed by Lord Brougham that such marriages contracted after that time should be deemed illegal; and that view being taken by certain Members of the bench of bishops, it was enacted that after the passing of that Bill marriages with a deceased wife's sister should not be permitted. The result of the Act was, however, that, notwithstanding its provisions, thousands of marriages had, since it was passed, taken place between the prohibited degrees. An inquiry, indeed, was instituted into the matter, and persons were called before the Commissioners who had made it their business to ascertain all the circumstances which could be discovered as to the violation of the law. And here he would be allowed to allude to the attempts to throw discredit upon the view of the matter which he was urging, on the ground that particular individuals had interested themselves, and had instituted inquiries into the subject. Indeed he did not see how, unless this had been done, it would be possible to ascertain numerous facts of high importance necessary to be taken into consideration in dealing with the question. The course taken had been this: the parties interested in the matter had selected a firm in London, of the highest respectability, as a central point, to which all information was to be communicated; and they employed gentlemen of station and intelligence to go through the country collecting the necessary particulars. From these sources the necessary information had been ascertained, and they were thus alluded to in the eighth page of the Commissioners' report:—

"Towards the close of the year 1846 a limited inquiry was instituted, at the instigation and expense of some private individuals interested in this question, for the purpose of ascertaining to what extent the Act of 1835 had been infringed, and whether any hardships were inflicted by the operation of that Act, to such an extent as would warrant an application to Parliament for an alteration in the law. In stating the result of this inquiry, as it has been proved before us, we feel bound to observe, that, although made at the instance of interested parties, it appears to have been conducted by gentlemen of intelligence, station, and character, and with discretion, as well as with perfect integrity and good faith. The inquiry was limited to a period less than three months, and to a comparatively small portion of England alone; but five districts were selected with impartiality and discrimination, as likely to afford a test of the probable operation of the law throughout the kingdom. The districts consisted, 1st, of some of the manufacturing portions of Lancashire and Yorkshire; 2nd, Norfolk and Suffolk, and parts of Lincolnshire and Essex; 3rd, parts of Warwickshire and Staffordshire, including Birmingham and the Potteries; 4th, parts of Hampshire, Dorsetshire, and Devonshire, including Portsmouth, Southampton, Winchester, Dorchester, Plymouth, and Exeter; and, 5th, the towns of Bristol, Bath, and Cheltenham, and their immediate vicinities. Besides these districts, an inquiry was also commenced within the limits of the metropolis, but was not prosecuted to any extent, in consequence of the difficulty of obtaining information in so mixed and numerous a population, without any legal authority to require it. The summary of information thus obtained may be stated as follows, namely—Of marriages ascertained to have taken place in the districts alluded to, between parties within the prohibited degrees, 1,364 have been contracted since Lord Lyndhurst's Act; and of these, upwards of nine-tenths have been contracted with a deceased wife's sister. There were discovered, in the course of this inquiry, 88 cases only in which the Act had prevented an intended marriage; and of these 88 cases, 32 are stated to have resulted in open cohabitation, without the sanction of any form or ceremony. Of the marriages thus ascertained to have been contracted, very few were between persons in the poorer classes. For though we have reason to conclude that such marriages are at least as frequent in those classes as in any other, and perhaps even much more so, the condition and circumstances of the parties render their affinity less observed, and consequently difficult to be traced without more elaborate investigation. On the other hand, among the parties contracting

> these marriages since, as well as before, the Act of 1835, there are found to be many persons of station and property, and of unimpeachable character and religious habits."

It had, therefore, been ascertained by this inquiry that the number of prohibited marriages which had taken place since Lord Lyndhurst's Act had been 1,364. He could not well ascertain the proportion which the population of the districts inquired into bore to that of the whole kingdom; but it was difficult to suppose that the investigations had extended throughout more than one-tenth of the entire community. Taking it to be so, the result was, that the entire probable number of marriages would be about 13,000; and, giving three children to each marriage, which was a low average, they had no less than nearly 40,000 children, whose claims to legitimacy could not be legally admitted. Of course, if the districts examined into contained less than one-tenth of the population of England, the number of persons thus situated would be correspondingly greater. Perhaps, then, there had taken place from 30,000 to 50,000 prohibited marriages since the statute of Lord Lyndhurst. Now, he did not make use of this fact to argue that, because many persons violated the law, the law should be therefore changed; but he did think that it was a fact which showed that the law was one which had not obtained the general acquiescence of society, while the calamitous state of things resulting from the circumstances called loudly for redress. But the prohibitory statute created evils of a different kind. In addition to having led to perjury and evasion of the law, it had placed the clergy in a false position, for he found it stated—and that, too, by clergymen who had been opposed to any change in the present law—that they found it impossible to ascertain the affinity of parties who presented themselves for marriage, and that, in fact, they were daily celebrating illegal marriages without knowledge of the fact. This was a position very painfully felt by many of the clergy. Either the House ought to devise some means of more rigid and effectual restriction, which they could not do, or it must alter the law so as to bring it more in accordance with public opinion. But, besides, many marriages were now contracted before registrars. In the case of such marriages there was absolutely no check. The difficulty was greatly increased. Again, it was found that persons of property and station, being unwilling to break the law, resorted abroad, while even in the middle classes there were numerous instances of persons expatriating themselves permanently or temporarily for the purpose of freeing themselves from the trammels of the English law. Yet all foreign marriages of this kind contracted by British subjects, were, by Lord Lyndhurst's law, null and void, unless the parties were absolutely domiciled abroad. Such being the effects of the Act, surely some remedy was required. What was the opinion of the Commissioners?—

> "We cannot avoid the conclusion that the Statute 5 & 6 William IV., c. 54, has failed to attain the object sought to be effected by its prospective enactments. It has not prevented marriage with the sister or niece of a deceased wife from taking place in numerous instances; whether more or less numerous than before the passing of the statute, we have not, as was before observed, sufficient data to enable us to form an opinion. But, without reference to any comparison of this description, the number of those marriages is so great as to justify us in saying that the provisions of that statute, rendering them null and void, have not generally deterred parties from forming such connexions. No doubt this is a great and continually increasing evil. On a low computation, such marriages must amount to thousands; but from the nature of the connexion, and the secrecy which often attaches to it, their number cannot be accurately ascertained. The evil is great; for, as beyond all reasonable doubt, such marriages, when celebrated in England or Ireland, are void, the consequences are disastrous to the parties and their issue, at once affecting all the relations of mutual duty and obligation, as well as the rights dependent upon *status;* nor less pernicious in a public view, as exhibiting avowed disobedience to law by the open assumption of a sacred character which the law expressly denies."

The Commissioners then proceeded to state the effects of the law on the poorer classes. And here let the House observe, that although they might succeed in getting persons of education and refinement to obey the law, although at the expense of much hardship and severe suffering, it was quite impossible to prevent illegal marriages amongst the poorer classes. The effect of the prohibitory statute upon these classes was briefly described by one of the witnesses, who told the Commissioners that in the families of the poor the result of the death of a wife, when a sister was domiciled in the household, was either to turn that sister away, out into the streets, or, if she remained, to bring about, if not marriage, at least cohabitation with the widower. Members of poor families, this witness said, were thrown into such immediate contact, that if they had no hope of marriage, they would probably continue to live together without it. Many witnesses, some of them clergymen, took the same view of the subject, and the Commissioners came to this conclusion—

> "Among the poorer classes of society, we believe that, in a great majority of cases where the sister of the deceased wife becomes an inmate of the house, and the parties are not advanced in age, the end of such a state of things is marriage or concubinage."

Could there be a more unhappy state of things than that thus presented to their view? They not only had a law which was continually evaded—they not only had a law which led to perjury and immorality—but they had a law which was so little in accordance with the feelings of the people, and so inefficient for the purposes for which it was intended, that thousands on thousands of their poorer fellow-countrymen, who were placed in circumstances of irresistible temptation, and yet debarred from marriage, were led to live in a state of concubinage. On the whole, then, he thought that this question assumed a most important character, and it was with this conviction that he would urge upon the House the propriety of allowing him to bring in his Bill. The present state of the law was fruitful of immorality and demoralisation amongst the lower classes, and it would surely be admitted that it was the duty of the Legislature to apply some remedy to an evil which, as the Commissioners stated, was not only already great in itself, but was daily increasing in magnitude. The Commissioners closed their report in these words:—

> "On a review of the subject, in all these its different bearings and effects, we are constrained not only to express our belief that the Statute 5 & 6 William IV. has failed to attain its object, but also to express our doubt, whether any measure of a prohibitory character would be effectual. These marriages will take place when a concurrence of circumstances give rise to mutual attachment: they are not dependent on legislation. We are not inclined to think, that such attachments and marriages would be extensively increased in number were the law to permit them; because, as we have said, it is not the state of the law, prohibitory or permissive, which has governed, or, as we think, ever will effectually govern them."

He would now leave the question in the hands of the Legislature. Into the social argument of what was likely to be the effect of a change in the law, with respect to the relations of husband and wife, he would not enter. He would content himself with remarking that, in his opinion, the evils resulting from the present state of the law were greater than any which could be anticipated from the change which he proposed to introduce. But whatever the arguments might be arising from the delicacies and niceties of social intercourse, these arguments were confined to the higher and middle classes, while to the poor, who were compelled to live together with scanty accommodation, they did not and could not apply. He held in his hand letters from many clergymen, incumbents of populous parishes, who stated that the condition of their flocks was so injuriously affected by the present state of the law, that they were fully prepared to advocate its alteration. He had had similar communications from persons of the greatest weight and highest character in the Church; for, be it observed, that it could not be said, with reference to the extensive evasions of the prohibitory statutes amongst the poorer classes, that there also existed, in the instances of the persons thus marrying within the prohibitory limits, many gross cases of adultery and incest. On the contrary, it was proved that the great majority of persons who had contracted these marriages were persons of moral habits and religious feeling, and persons who did not otherwise offend against the law. He thought that he had now said enough to induce the House to consent to the introduction of his Bill, and he would therefore shortly state some of its principal provisions. Before he did so, he might, however, remark, with reference to marriages with nieces of the deceased wives, that, although such instances were rare, they did occasionally happen, and that it would be difficult to permit marriage in the closer degrees without relaxing at the same time the rules which forbade it in the more remote stage of affinity. Otherwise, he would hardly have deemed the case of marriage with a deceased wife's niece to be deserving of any alteration in the law. Now, as to the provisions of his Bill, he did not intend to extend the permission to any other degrees, or to alter Archbishop Parker's table in any respect, but as regarded marriages with the sisters and nieces of deceased wives. Neither did he intend to permit a widow to marry her deceased husband's brother; as, without entering into the social part of the subject, he considered that such a state of things would more probably tend to the introduction of immorality into a family than could be expected from the converse condition of matters. As regarded the clergy, he did not intend to make it compulsory on them to celebrate these marriages. He knew that there was a difficulty in this part of the case. It had been doubted whether there were any means of compelling a clergyman to perform a legal marriage. His own opinion was, that a clergyman could be so compelled, and he would therefore provide, on the one hand, that no clergyman should be liable to a suit for celebrating marriages of this kind; and, on the other, that no clergyman should be liable to a suit for refusing to celebrate them. He wished to avoid as much as possible interfering with the laws of the Church. But he was obliged to make one provision. These marriages were permitted in almost every Protestant country. They were permitted in the United States. True, Dr. Pusey had attempted to show that the results had been injurious in Germany and other countries; but the House would find it broadly laid down in the report that these statements were destitute of foundation. But in many countries there was a dispensing power vested in the ecclesiastical authorities with reference to these marriages. This, for instance, was the law of Hanover; and, until the separation of the two crowns the King of England was often called upon to grant dispensation for an act, which in England was held to be illegal. Now, if he could place such a power in the hands of anybody analogous to those by whom it was exercised on the Continent, he would willingly do so. But he could find in this country no satisfactory depositary for a dispensing power. Notwithstanding, however, he did propose to prevent marriages of the kind in question taking place in cases where there had been immorality between the parties before the death of the wife. In no such cases, he thought, ought marriages between the prohibited degrees in question to be allowed. It was not his intention to confine his measure to England. He trusted to make it applicable to all parts of the kingdom. The Scotch law on the question was doubtful, but these marriages did not often take place in Scotland. The effect of his measure would, therefore, be to legalise such marriages in Scotland if they were now illegal; but if the reverse were the case, to leave matters as they stood at present. But there was another class of persons who were entitled in this respect to great attention at the hands of the House. In 1836, a Bill was passed to afford to persons dissenting from the Established Church the means of marriage according to their own forms and opinions. From the evidence contained in the report it would be seen that by some of the bodies in question the practice of marriage with a deceased wife's sister was considered to be contrary to the laws of God, and therefore he thought that the dissenting sects in question were entitled to some such measure as that which he now proposed. Having thus stated the grounds upon which he rested his measure, he would not further detain the House. The Bill which he asked leave to introduce affected a very large class of the community, and he believed that, were it to pass, such a result would be matter of sincere happiness and rejoicing to thousands, who were now suffering from the present unsatisfactory and anomalous state of our law upon the subject.

The question having been put,

MR. A. J. B. HOPE said, that if he did not divide the House upon leave to bring in the Bill, at which stage a similar Bill was rejected in 1842, it was not because he was less strongly opposed to the measure than he was then, but simply out of deference to the Royal Commission. Still he must make a few observations on the speech of his right hon. Friend (Mr. S. Wortley). The right hon. Gentleman had argued that the early Church did not absolutely prohibit such marriages, from the apostolical canons only declaring that those who contracted them should not be competent to take holy orders; but at the same time those canons were made, the church was but a body of dissenters from the religion of the State, and could not, therefore, inflict temporal punishment for what was not against the laws of the State. A person wishing to make such a marriage, might do so by leaving the Christian community. By a similar argument it might be asserted, that because St. Paul said a bishop should not be a drunkard or an extortioner, therefore there was no harm in a layman being such. Mr. Binney, indeed, in the evidence in this question, had applied this to the case of a bishop being ordered to be the husband of one wife, as proof of polygamy not being forbidden to the earliest converts. St. Basil, in his letter to Diodorus, speaks of such a marriage as a thing unheard of. It was quite clear that the practice of the Church of England, both before and after the time of James I., was against such, though between that time and the passing of Lord Lyndhurst's

Act, the civil had thereby invaded the prerogatives of the ecclesiastical court. The case, however, of Regina *v.* Chadwick, had set at rest what were the prohibited degrees. The secret history of Lord Lyndhurst's Act was alleged, but this no where appeared on the face of it. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of the comments which had been made upon the use which the Commission had made of the labours of Messrs. Crowder and Mayward. He did not object to their having done so, as they could not do otherwise; but he did so to their not having taken pains to get evidence on the other side. It was just like a Railway Committee examining the promoters of a Bill, and not attending to the landowners' case. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the Commission had investigated a tenth of England, and based his statistics on this calculation. But this tenth of England included Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield, Hull, Birmingham, Coventry, Norwich, Southampton, Bath, Bristol, Cheltenham, Plymouth, and Devonport. Unless the Commission had examined the condition of marriage altogether in those close and crowded towns which afforded such a fearful and multitudinous detail of sin and vice, they had no right to come down with such a report to the House. The extent of concubinage in them was notorious. It stood *ex confessio* that Lord Lyndhurst's Act was little known amongst the lower orders. The same would be the case with the present Bill. He did not believe that, if the proposed Bill passed, there would be much increase of such marriages. Persons, as it is, go to be married, and the clergyman does not know how they are related to each other. As to the argument that, therefore, the clergy should be relieved from celebrating marriages which are illegal, by legalising them, it would apply as well to legalising bigamy, for our newspapers show how often bigamous marriages are celebrated by the clergy. He concluded with expressing his intention of dividing against the second reading of the Bill.

MR. ROUNDELL PALMER said, that he could not allow the Bill to be introduced without stating distinctly that he would, on all fitting opportunities, offer to it his most strenuous opposition. He did think this the most desirable opportunity to commence that opposition, because the very gravity of the subject rendered it necessary that the House should not come to the discussion with imperfect information, and without having full time to consider the character and nature of the specific measure which his right hon. Friend (Mr. S. Wortley) now sought to introduce. Reserving, therefore, to himself the power of entering into the debate at a future time, he thought it best at present not to go into any matters of principle or detail at any length, but merely to state the matters which the House would have to consider between the present time and the period when the measure would be discussed. Had they sufficient grounds for altering a law which undoubtedly stood upon this only basis, that down to this moment it had been received in England as the true exponent of a part of Christian morality, and of the will of God, applicable to all nations? It had been so believed by those who made the law; the Commissioners admitted that the same belief prevailed now throughout Scotland, and very generally among the clergy—at all events—of the Church of England. Had they, then, sufficient grounds, either upon the score of divinity or public expediency, to alter a law of that sort, on which, if they were wrong, they would be acting contrary to that morality upon which the very foundation of their institutions depended? It was now proposed to abolish only one or two of the prohibited degrees of affinity; but if those degrees were taken away, a code would remain inconsistent with itself. The House must not come to the discussion of this subject under the apprehension that Lord Lyndhurst's Act had introduced any change whatever into the principle of the law; and upon reference to the Act itself they would find it impossible to concur in his right hon. Friend's conclusions on that point. He confessed that he really did expect when the Commission issued, that they should have had an inquiry of a very different kind from that which now appeared in the report on the table. He was not prepared to hear that Commissioners appointed by the Crown upon a matter affecting the morality of the nation would have proceeded upon an *exparte* case previously got up, namely, through the agency of solicitors, by interested parties; for of the evidence of such parties, and the materials collected by them, the whole staple of the report, with very few exceptions, was composed. He had expected that archbishops and bishops of the Church would have been called, because they could have given a fair representation of the doctrine of the Church, and of the feelings of their respective flocks on so important a question. He found, however, that five clergy on one side had been examined, to balance five clergy on the other; but while they were certainly most respectable men, they were by no means an adequate representation of the Church of England for such a purpose. Two Dissenting ministers had also given evidence; but no ground was shown for treating their evidence as a sufficient exponent of the general belief of the Dissenting bodies at large. The report contained, in addition, the opinions of some Roman Catholics and Jews; but, from the whole tenor of it, the House would learn that, although the Commissioners were appointed to inquire into the whole subject of marriage, they had practically confined themselves to certain particular degrees of affinity, with respect to which interested parties had previously been looking out for information. The evidence was therefore not entitled to the credit which the right hon. Mover had anticipated for it, and this was a point deserving of the serious consideration of hon. Members, and particularly of Her Majesty's Ministers.

Mr. HENLEY wished to guard himself against being supposed to give any sanction to the present measure in not opposing it at the present stage of its proceeding; and, deferring to those whose wisdom and knowledge of the subject were superior to his, he would yield to their intention of not dividing the House on the present occasion. He should observe, however, that in the remarks made about the former Commission, and the manner in which it had been conducted, he perfectly concurred. He never had heard of a Commission to the report of which less authority might be attached in that House. What amount of credit could be attached to that report if they took from it the interested witnesses examined? Actually, almost nothing. He believed no Commission had ever produced a report on evidence so unsatisfactory. He had read that evidence with the greatest possible care and attention; and it appeared to him that it was hardly possible for any person to peruse it attentively without coming to the conclusion that the witnesses on one side had been subject to a very different kind of cross-examination from that of the witnesses on the other side. That might have been accidental. He knew nothing of the opinion of the Commissioners themselves; but he certainly had been very much struck by the searching cross-examination of the witnesses opposed to those marriages, and the absence of any such cross-examination of the witnesses in their favour. It appeared to him, however, that it was those latter witnesses whose statements ought to have been most carefully sifted, as they were for the most part persons personally interested in the view which they took of the question. They might almost be looked upon in the same light as electioneering agents; and every one knew that the statements of those agents should be received with the greatest caution; for it was well known that they usually returned as favourable to their candidate every man who did not actually spit in their faces. Much had been said relative to the mischiefs and grievances caused by the existing law; but the districts selected by the right hon. Mover for obtaining his list of these complaints were principally situated on the sea-coast—such, for instance, as Portsmouth, Southampton, and Plymouth. If he had inquired how many wives men had at those places, he could have made out numerous cases of bigamy. He could then have shown how many men had two wives, and how many had half-a-dozen. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had said that the Commissioners had not recommended any alteration of the existing law, because that had not come within their powers; but he took care to give the House to understand, in a manner which he (Mr. Henley) thought hardly fair, that he was speaking their sentiments. [Mr. Wortley: What I said was, that I could not say how any Commissioner could put his name to that report, unless he was prepared for an alteration, and probably a relaxation, of the law.] He was sorry to find he had mis-stated the tendency of the hon. and learned Gentleman's language. But he had next to observe, that there was one very extraordinary omission in the report of the Commissioners. One of the most important points involved in the whole question, was the condition in which an alteration of the existing law would place the clergymen of the Church of England; and yet the Commissioners had left that point wholly unnoticed. That omission was the more unaccountable, inasmuch as the point had been referred to by some of the witnesses. An Irish clergyman stated that the clergy could not celebrate such marriages. Archdeacon Sinclair said he hoped they would not be compelled to celebrate them; and Mr. Patterson said that the clergy felt themselves restrained in the matter by the canon law. Now, that was a serious difficulty. In what position was the House disposed to place those gentlemen? Would the noble Lord opposite (Lord J. Russell) have recourse to a convocation? And if not, how could he release the clergy from the canon law without it? The hon. and learned Gentleman had endeavoured to throw discredit on the canon law, as having been framed by Cranmer and Parker; but it should be remembered that it had been ratified and accepted by the Sovereign in the year 1603. At all events, many clergymen of the Established Church felt bound by the canon law, and the House should not overlook that circumstance. He did not mean to enter on that occasion into a discussion of the general merits of the question; but he could not help taking that opportunity of stating, that if ever there had been a case artistically got up, it was the case made out by those Commissioners. From the report no one could come to the conclusion that those marriages had been prohibited by the Church from the earliest ages; and yet there could be no doubt of that fact. The report got rid of the religious point of view of the subject in the most extraordinary manner; it would have you believe that the Pope had to do with the early ages of Christianity. Why, this degree of affinity was wholly rejected in the Eastern marriages; and the Eastern and Western Church did represent, before their unhappy differences, the united opinion of Christianity. He entertained strong objections to the measure upon social grounds, as well as upon others. He certainly saw nothing either in the report or in the evidence which ought to induce the Legislature to outrage the feelings of the community at large for the benefit of a few individuals, who deliberately, and with their eyes open, had violated the law of their country, and the law of that Church of which many of them were professing members. The whole of the people of Scotland, both clergy and laity, were opposed to these marriages; in Ireland, persons contracting such marriages were regarded with abhorrence; and in England, the great majority of the people decidedly disapproved of them. Under these circumstances, he hoped that the House would not pass the proposed measure, and thereby do violence to the public feeling, and compel clergymen to celebrate marriages which the great majority of them believed to be contrary, not only to the canon law, but also to the law of God.

SIR G. GREY said, that as he understood there was to be no opposition to the Motion for leave to bring in the Bill, he would not address the House at any length on that occasion. If there had been any opposition to the Motion, he should have been prepared to state in his individual capacity the grounds on which he was prepared to give his assent to the Motion for leave to lay on the table a Bill to alter the laws relating to the marriage of persons connected by affinity in the manner which it was clear the Commissioners were disposed to recommend. He agreed with his hon. and learned Friend, that to the evidence collected by the Commissioners, as well as to their report, it was the duty of Gentlemen to give their careful attention; and unless further consideration should have the effect of changing the opinion which he then entertained, he would state on the second reading of the Bill the grounds on which he should give it his support. He should, however, limit his approval of the measure to its main provision—namely, that for altering the laws which regulated the marriages of persons connected by that degree of affinity to which the report and evidence chiefly referred; and he did not wish to be understood as agreeing in all the details which had been stated. He did not concur in the reproaches which had been cast on the Commissioners for the manner in which they had conducted their inquiries. The hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Henley) had said that they should reject the evidence because it had been given by interested parties. But the hon. Gentleman should have remembered that interested parties were alone capable of stating to the Commissioners the results of the present law, and detailing those facts which should influence the decision of the House. It appeared to him that the Commissioners would not have properly discharged their duty if they had omitted to examine not only those who approved of the existing law, but those also who were able to show that that law had failed of accomplishing its object. It had been said that the marriages in question had been prohibited by the ancient Church. But many of the prohibitions of the ancient Church were so unnatural and absurd, that it would be impossible to attempt to enforce them, unless a dispensing power was at the same time granted, such as that possessed in the Roman Catholic Church by the Pope. He believed that the law on the subject of those marriages in this country, was at present in a state of uncertainty which was extremely undesirable, and prejudicial to some of the best interests of society. The law upon the subject differed from that which prevailed throughout the greater part of the Continental States of Europe and of America; and it had failed to secure the objects for which it had been framed. Lord Lyndhurst's Act had rendered valid marriages of that description contracted before its enactment; so that it had given to them a legislative sanction; and he (Sir G. Grey) could not understand how any person, who believed that these marriages were opposed to the Divine law, could hold that the Legislature ought to have declared their validity. Under all the circumstances of the case, he felt that his right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. S. Wortley) was entitled to the thanks of the House for his endeavours to remedy the evil to which this Bill applied. Whether his Bill was fully calculated to attain that object, he would not then discuss; but he had no hesitation in giving his assent to the introduction of the measure.

Mr. NAPIER said, that the feeling of his constituents on that subject was so strong, and he so completely concurred in that feeling, that he was anxious to take that opportunity of briefly stating the grounds on which he should give his most determined opposition to the Bill in all its stages. The question was one of the highest importance with reference to the social system prevailing in this country. Marriage rested on two grounds. It had a religious basis, and it had a civil sanction. With respect to the religious view of the question, he could only say, that no evidence which Commissioners might produce could shake a conviction to which he had come on Divine authority. He did not form his conclusion on the subject from private interpretation only. He had the mind of the Church of England, of the Church of Ireland, and of the Church of Scotland, and a concurrent Christian testimony of centuries, that those marriages were forbidden by the law of God to guide him in the matter; and the contents of that book could not remove the decision to which he had come under such guidance. Others differed, and had a right to differ, from him upon the subject; but it would be his duty to act on the conviction which he sincerely entertained. It had been said, that there was a class of persons whose feelings would be outraged if that Bill were not passed. But they had no alternative, except to do violence to the feelings of persons who had advisedly violated the law, or to do violence to the great mass of the people of this country, to the whole people of Scotland, and to the members of the Irish branch of the Established Church. They must choose between those two courses. Which would they adopt? Would they condescend to stoop to the animal passions of the violators of the law; or would they uphold, and ratify, and reverence a religious feeling consecrated by the concurrent testimony of ages? They had in favour of the existing law a strong religious conviction, a social system based on that conviction, and all those feelings connected with home which were so dear to Englishmen. But they were then called upon to disregard these considerations, and to defer to man's passions. Christianity, however, did not stoop to man's passions: it compassionated human infirmity, but it entered into no compromise with the vices of mankind. But, setting aside the religious view of the matter, he thought that there might be very intelligible reasons for the present law in the social system itself. He believed that the intimacy which necessarily subsisted between persons connected by affinity, required to be guarded by very hallowed feelings; and that advantage was afforded by that wise provision which interdicted those marriages. If they once stepped beyond the demarcation set down by the word of God, where would they stop? There was a reasonable fact in the history of the Irish Church, bearing upon that subject, which he wished to state to the House. He found that in the eighth century, before the Irish Church had been handed over by England to the See of Rome, a canon had been passed denouncing the marriage of a man with his deceased wife's sister, and placing it on the same footing as the marriage of a female with the brother of her deceased husband. He admitted that the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Stuart Wortley) had brought the question under the notice of the House with great ability and moderation; but, as he could not help thinking that the proposed measure was opposed to the word of God, and would dangerously interfere with domestic happiness and the most sacred relations of private life, he should feel it his duty to give to it his most earnest, firm, and determined opposition.

Mr. PLUMPTRE had formerly entertained some doubts upon this subject, and having been led into a serious inquiry, the result of that inquiry induced him to offer to the measure proposed his decided opposition, being under the impression that the proposed alteration would involve greater evils than those which at present existed. And upon reflection, he thought it was a very serious question that the very parties themselves, whom it was proposed to benefit, might not suffer materially by this change. Was it not likely, if the proposed marriage of the husband with the sister of his deceased wife were rendered legal, that during the life-time of the wife it would lead to jealousies, suspicions, and discontent? — jealousies and suspicions which did not now exist. Although such marriages might not be supposed to be in direct contradiction to the word of God, still they were contrary to the spirit and tenor of the Scriptures. Now, this being the case, there could be no doubt that the measure would lead to estrangement, and prevent that social intercourse which at present existed. He begged to direct the especial attention of the House to the opinions of the clergy of the united dioceses of Down and Connor. The petition of those clergymen embraced the most important points connected with the subject, and was, in every respect, deserving of the consideration of the Legislature. He would certainly oppose the Bill.

Mr. STUART WORTLEY replied, that he had endeavoured to introduce this subject in as calm and dispassionate a manner as he was capable of, to the notice of the House, and regretted exceedingly that more than one hon. Gentleman had departed from that calm and dispassionate tone and manner. Anything more unwarrantable than the attacks of the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth, and the hon. Member for Oxfordshire, he had never heard. He owned he was not prepared to hear language or rather lucubrations of so strong a nature. It was alleged that the Commission had heard the evidence only upon one side, and that six clergymen had been examined who were known to entertain views favourable to the measure. Now, what was the fact? Why, that six clergymen had been examined upon one side, and six upon the other. It would seem, from the representations of hon. Gentlemen, as if the strongest feelings were entertained by the clergy upon the subject; whereas, the truth was, there was the greatest difficulty in procuring the attendance of clergymen to give evidence before the Commission. So far from there having been anything unfair, unjust, or one-sided in the proceedings of the Commission, there was every encouragement to parties to come forward—every publicity; and there were even letters written to clergymen, in various districts, to come before the Commission. This zeal on the part of the Commission was not responded to. The clergymen of the united kingdom, as a body, did not manifest any desire to record their convictions; and, upon the whole, there seemed to be rather an indifference than anxiety upon the subject. The Commission appealed to Ireland, where he admitted there was a very strong feeling against the proposed change. There had been a strong remonstrance, every word of which was set out in this report. He was really almost induced to question his hon. Friend (Mr. Henley), when he stated that he had read the report of the Commission. His hon. Friend alleged partiality on the part of the Commission. Why, the Commission had examined six of the clergymen of the archdeaconry of Middlesex, and their opinions were equally divided upon the subject. They had also examined clergymen of the archdeaconry of Ripon, and the result was, that two were for the change, and one against it. Now, what did the report itself set forth?—

> "We have been particularly desirous to ascertain the opinion of the clergy of the Established Church in England, on the two questions, whether the marriage with the sister of a deceased wife is prohibited by the law of God; or, if not, whether it ought to be interdicted upon any other ground. The number of clergy in England is so great, that we have found it impracticable to collect the opinions of the individuals composing that body. We have, however, to the utmost of our power, caused it to be made known that we were ready to receive information from every quarter, and more especially from the clergy; and we have taken the evidence of those who were known, by their published opinions or otherwise, to have carefully considered the subject—and on both sides of the question. We are satisfied that a great diversity of opinion prevails among the clergy of the Established Church in England upon both questions. We think that very many of them do not consider such marriages to be prohibited by the law of God, but that the majority object to them either upon this, or upon other grounds. In Ireland, the great majority of the clergy of the Established Church are represented as disapproving of these connexions, which are rare also

> among the Presbyterians in that country, and are generally disapproved of by their ministers."

Did this prove the charge of the hon. Gentleman, that the Commission had shut out the evidence of clergymen? Nothing could be more unjust and ungenerous than such a charge. They had taken the evidence of Dr. Pusey at great length, than whom there was no higher authority. His evidence extended over seventeen pages. Then his hon. Friend (Mr. Henley) alleged that the Commissioners had not said a word about the practice of the Greek Church—that they had, in fact, suppressed that part. Now, let hon. Members refer to the report, and there they would find the following paragraph:—

> "In the Greek Church these marriages are considered incestuous and unlawful, and are not allowed, either by dispensation or otherwise. But in the case of a marriage solemnised in Russia, between persons not in communion with the Eastern Church, it seems, that such a marriage, if permitted by the law or discipline of the community to which these persons belong, would not be invalidated by the law of the State."

It was true, as the hon. Gentleman said, that they had not extended their inquiries into the several degrees of consanguinity—they had thought it right to confine themselves to the particular question before them—otherwise their inquiry would be endless, and, probably, useless. The report plainly says—

> "We have directed our inquiries to the laws of other countries with respect to marriages within the prohibited degrees of affinity, and more especially to a marriage with the sister of a deceased wife. From the evidence which we have taken, there can be no doubt that this last class of marriages is, of all those within the prohibited degrees, by far the most frequent; so much so, that it necessarily forms the most important consideration in the whole subject. When, therefore, for the future, we speak, in this report, of marriages within the prohibited degrees, we intend, when it is not otherwise declared, to confine our observations to marriages with the sister of a deceased wife."

Hon. Gentlemen seemed to speak as if the subject-matter of inquiry was either a great party or a great personal question. Now, he would like to know what interest had he or any other Member of the Committee in making the result appear favourable to the proposed measure, or otherwise? But it was said that several witnesses had not been cross-examined, and that others had. What was the fact? Some legal and other professional gentlemen stated certain facts which had come under their knowledge. The Members of the Commission, having had no reason to presume that the evidence given was incorrect, did not cross-examine them; but when clergymen came to speak upon doctrinal and theoretical matters, upon which differences of opinion were entertained, then the Commissioners did examine some of them, in order to ascertain the grounds upon which their particular opinions rested. He regretted extremely if he had been betrayed into any warmth in making these observations, for he was most anxious to keep the question free from all asperities; and he trusted that nothing of the kind would be exhibited on discussing the second reading. Without saying more, he begged to express his obligations to the House and the right hon. Baronet for allowing the question to be discussed.

Marriage Act (5 & 6 Will. 4, c. 54) read; Bill to amend and alter the said Act, so far as relates to marriage within certain degrees of affinity, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Stuart Wortley, Mr. Edmund Denison, and Mr. Masterman.

CLERGY RELIEF—THE TOLERATION ACT.

Mr. BOUVERIE rose to move—

> "That this House will immediately resolve itself into a Committee, to consider of granting Relief to Persons in Holy Orders of the United Church of England and Ireland declaring their dissent therefrom."

The noble Lord at the head of the Government, in moving for leave to bring in a Bill for altering the oaths which Members now took at the table of that Hause, said that the measure which he introduced would complete the edifice of toleration which they had been for many years building up in this country. The noble Lord was ignorant, or forgot the state, of the law to which he (Mr. Bouverie) wished to draw their attention. It might be a matter of question whether the denial of the franchise was persecution; but he apprehended there could be no question about the fact, that as long as a man might be subjected to pains and penalties—to the loss of liberty or property, for the profession of certain religious opinions, that act was a persecuting one. The Toleration Act was the great foundation of religious freedom in this country. Previously to its adoption, religious persecution, so far from being a wrong, was esteemed to be a duty. He now wished to draw the attention of the House to that Act. Provided that all persons took the oaths of supremacy and allegiance, and made a declaration against the doctrine of transubstantiation, they were relieved from the penalties imposed by the Acts respecting religious opinions, which originated in the reign of Elizabeth, and terminated in that of Charles II. It was further provided, with reference to persons in holy orders, or, as the phrase went, "pretending to holy orders," and who declared their adherence to the Articles of the Church of England, except to the third, and part of the fourth Article—that they should be exempt from the provisions of the Conventicle Act, and what was called the "Five Miles Act." It was somewhat singular that Roman Catholics, and those who denied the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, were exempt from the operations of these Acts, as were, indeed, all persons except those in holy orders who did not declare their approbation of the Articles of the Church of England. The Act of George III. declared, that persons in holy orders, or "pretended holy orders," teaching or pretending to teach God's word, were not obliged to subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles, provided they professed their belief in the Holy Scriptures. But his object was not to refer to a mere theoretical alteration, or to provide for hypothetical cases, but to legislate against the recurrence of such decisions as had lately taken place in the Court of Queen's Bench in the case of Mr. Shore. The Court of Queen's Bench had within the last three years decided that a minister who dissented from the Church of England had, although exempt from all statutory penalties in the common law courts, subjected himself to penal proceedings in the ecclesiastical courts. Conformity with the Toleration Act should release all persons from prosecution in the ecclesiastical courts: it did so in fact, except as regarded clergymen of the Church of England; but the Court of Queen's Bench decided that even breaches of the discipline of the Church of England, the eclesiastical court had, notwithstanding the Toleration Act, perfect cognisance of; that, in short, the Acts of toleration which had been passed did not apply to the ecclesiastical courts. The consequence of that decision was that a clergyman who had once entered into holy orders was bound hand and foot by the discipline of the Church of England, and no step which he could take in compliance with the statutes of toleration would release him from that obedience; he was, in fact, a mere villein or serf to the Church *adscriptus ecclesiæ;* not even deposition from holy orders would—so far as he could learn—free such a person from the penalties of the ecclesiastical court. Now, he thought that none of the great framers of the Toleration Act could have contemplated the imposition of such penalties. No man conversant with the history of the period when the Toleration Act had its rise, would contend to that effect. This was the very grievance of which the Nonconformists complained. Richard Baxter, whose name would live as long as there was any respect for virtue, piety, or holiness, was a minister episcopally ordained; he survived the Revolution of 1688. Would any one contend that the framers of the Toleration Act would contemplate the liability of Richard Baxter to all the pains and penalties of the ecclesiastical court after that Act passed, merely for acting according to his conscientious conviction? Now, he thought, whatever courts of law might do, that they, as legislators, were bound to carry out the spirit and intent of the Toleration Act. It was not, as he had already stated, a mere matter of theory, but a practical question, forced upon their notice by the decision of the Court of Queen's Bench, with which, of course, he found no fault. The clergyman and defendant in the case to which he alluded, might be now, for aught he knew, a prisoner, under sentence of the ecclesiastical courts, and that gentleman, in his opinion, ought not to be incarcerated for a single moment. In the case to which he alluded a writ had been issued, and if the gentleman alluded to was not actually in prison, he might be apprehended and thrown into gaol for the period of his life, as the law now stood. Thank Heaven they had few such bishops since the time of the Revolution, as the right rev. Prelate in the case to which he adverted! there were few bishops who strained the law for the persecution of unoffending persons—not for the cause of morality or good order, but in order to enforce obsolete rules, which were a disgrace to our Legislature. Every one knew that the first turn in this country towards religious feeling, and the arousing of the Established Church from its dormant position, were the teachings of John Wesley, who, whatever might be thought of his doctrines, was yet, for the good he had done, and the purity and sincerity of his motives, held in reverence by the ministers of the Established Church. Now, John Wesley was an episcopally ordained minister; and if the bishops of that day entertained the same opinions as a bishop of the present, John Wesley or George Whitfield might have been locked up in gaol during the remainder of their days. If anything could revolt the feelings of the great body of the people from the Church, it was proceedings of this kind. When simple-minded men saw such an illustration of the doctrines of the Church, they were sure to be indisposed to listen to its teaching. The persecutions by the Roman Catholics, in the time of Queen Mary, were the greatest means of making the people become Protestants. After dwelling at some further length upon this portion of the subject, and stating that, in his opinion, nothing could be more distasteful or revolting to the feelings of the people of England than such persecutions on account of religious opinions, the hon. Gentleman proceeded to refer the House to the opinion of the present Archbishop of Canterbury, as conveyed in a letter recently published, in which his Grace said that there ought to be some method by which clergymen might disconnect themselves from the Church of England without being subject to the penalties of the law. He would now briefly state the provisions of the measure which he intended to introduce. He proposed that clergymen of the Established Church, and who dissented from it, should, in addition to the oath which they were required to make or take, as dissenting ministers, upon seceding from the Church, make, in addition, a declaration of dissent from the Articles of the Church; that that declaration should be registered according to the Toleration Act; that a copy of that declaration should be forwarded to the bishop of the diocese in which the declarant resided or held a benefice; and that the bishop should register such declaration, which thereupon should have the full force and effect of a sentence of deprivation from the benefice and of orders in the Church, and that he should be relieved from all burdens and liabilities as a clergyman of the Church of England, and lose all rights and privileges to which, in the character of a clergyman of that Church, he was entitled; but that, at the same time, he should not be subjected to any pains or penalties for such conscientious avowal, except the negative ones he had stated. He did not profess to enter into any theological questions; but his object, and the object of the measure which he would lay upon the table (if permitted) was to place such a person, with respect to the Church of England, on the same footing as if he had not entered into holy orders at all.

Sir J. GRAHAM: Would you make him eligible to a seat in this House?

Mr. BOUVERIE: Yes; I shall propose it. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the resolutions stated above.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE said, he regretted that the hon. Member for Kilmarnock had thought it necessary to pass a censure on the proceedings in the ecclesiastical courts. He doubted whether this was at all warranted. The hon. Gentleman was certainly not correct in drawing a parallel between the proceedings of Mr. Shore and those of John Wesley. At the time John Wesley commenced his missionary operations, he was as much attached to the Articles of the Church of England as any bishop on the bench; and he would sooner have burnt off his right hand than have subscribed the declaration which it was proposed that Dissenting clergymen should be permitted to subscribe. What he (Mr. Gladstone) had understood of the case recently before the ecclesiastical courts was, that the Bishop of Exeter was perfectly willing to concur with Mr. Shore in expediting a process in the ecclesiastical courts, for the purpose of liberating the latter from his responsibilities, and at the same time depriving him of his character of clergyman; and that in point of fact this was prevented, either by the defect of the law, or the disinclination of Mr. Shore to take the declaration required, but that it was not the disposition of the Bishop of Exeter to insist on fastening on Mr. Shore the obligations of a clergyman, after he had become convinced in his own conscience that he ought not to continue such. However that might be, he heartily concurred with his hon. Friend in the object he had in view; and, provided there were no difficulty as to the details, he should be much surprised and much grieved if it did not give general satisfaction. No doubt it was an important change in the law, to enable a person entirely to free himself from the obligations which accompanied so solemn and important a step as the taking of holy orders. Some might doubt as to the propriety of the provision for enabling a clergyman to resume his eligibility for a seat in that House, on declaring himself a Dissenter. That, however, was a political question, on which no religious difference could take place. As to the principle of obligation to the Church, he heartily concurred with his hon. Friend in thinking that when a clergyman had deliberately changed his mind on the vows taken at his ordination, it was no longer the business of the law to dive into the opinions he might entertain. The measure proposed judiciously set aside all inquiry into theological questions; the House was not called on to affirm or deny any theological proposition whatever, but merely to apply the general principle of liberty of conscience to the case of clergymen, and to adopt a fair, equal, and well-balanced measure by which a clergyman desiring to exempt himself from the obligations of his position should have the power of doing so, being at the same time, as a matter of equal justice, deprived of the privileges of that position. Without the latter provision, the measure would only tend to introduce confusion; as it was, he thought it would effect a valuable improvement in the law, besides affording relief to the individuals concerned.

MR. BOUVERIE said, he had not drawn a parallel between John Wesley and Mr. Shore; he had only said that a bishop might have proceeded against John Wesley for preaching without a license, and he might have been thrown into prison.

The Motion was then agreed to, and the House went into Committee.

Matter *considered* in Committee :—

"*Resolved*—That the Chairman be directed to move the House, That leave be given to bring in a Bill for the relief of persons in Holy Orders of the United Church of England and Ireland declaring their dissent therefrom."

Resolution *reported;* Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Bernal, Mr. Bouverie, and Mr. Lushington.

LANDED PROPERTY (IRELAND).

MR. SHARMAN CRAWFORD rose to move—

"That the laws relating to landed property in Ireland, as affecting the rights and powers both of landlords and tenants, require the immediate consideration of this House, with a view to such alteration of these laws as will remove the obstacles at present existing to the improvement of the soil, and the employment of the people."

The hon. Gentleman said, he had frequently heard complaints in that House that Irish Members, though continually dwelling on the grievances of Ireland, never proposed any remedies. He wished to exempt himself from this reproach, and therefore submitted this resolution, as the foundation of a series of measures which could only be successfully promoted by the power of Government. For ages the people of Ireland had been depressed, and had become, as they were truly described, a potato-fed people. The great evil had been the minute subdivision of land, with a view to extort exorbitant rents, whereby the people had been compelled to resort to a lower diet, being without any regular employment. Since the repeated failures of the potato crop, the people were being rapidly exterminated. The only exception to this was the province of Ulster, where the per centage of pauperism was only 1½ in the 100, while in Connaught it was 9. In some unions in Ulster the per centage was as low as six-tenths in the hundred; it was not lower in any part of the united kingdom. Nevertheless, in Ulster, great part of the land was let in small farms, averaging from two to three acres. What, then, caused the difference between Ulster and the other provinces? In the latter the tenants had no interest in improving the land, nor had the landlords; for, owing to the system of middlemen, one was not at all dependent on the other. In Ulster, on the contrary, the general prevalence of what was called tenant-right gave a stimulus to industry and improvement. Having stated the condition of Ireland, and the causes of that condition, he would now state the remedies he proposed. First, he would give to landlords the full power of charging the inheritors with any improvements they might make on their estates. A measure to this effect had been introduced in a former Session, and he believed its principle was not opposed by the Government; but as it was to be carried out through the instrumentality of the Court of Chancery, it was more expensive than useful. Next, he would give landlords of estates under entail the power to grant long leases. Another most desirable measure was to extinguish, by some means, the rights of intermediate landlords. He wished these tenures to be so secured that the occupying tenants should be brought into direct communication with the landlords. He now came to the third measure, which he thought the most important of all. This was a measure which would secure to the tenant the value of his labour and improvements in the cultivation of the soil. The House was aware that this subject had for a long time engaged the attention of the Governments of this country. In 1836 the Poor Law Commissioners had reported upon the necessity of such a measure. In 1845, the Land Inquiry Commissioners had also reported upon the necessity of some such measure for the protection of tenants. Bills were introduced first by Lord Stanley, in 1845, then by the Earl of Lincoln, in 1846, and a third time by the Secretary for Ireland, in 1848: all of which proved abortive. The question naturally divided itself into two parts. In the province of Ulster, tenant-right existed; but the tenants were anxious that this right should be sanctioned by direct legislation: and it was not less important that the same right should be extended to the whole country. Another desirable measure would be to give the State the power of assuming waste lands, on a valuation to be properly made, with a view to their reclamation. This would be a most beneficial application of the public money; it would at once improve the land and give employment to the people. He did not ask the Government to furnish employment to all the paupers, but simply to open a market for labour. It was melancholy to reflect that in Connaught, where the greatest distress prevailed, there were a million and a half of acres of waste land. He would also ask the Government to assume the power of actually selling land on which the poor-rates were not paid. It was most unjust to the people of England, and other parts of Ireland, that they should be required to make good such arrears. The Bill which passed last Session, for effecting the sale of incumbered estates had been found inoperative; he therefore called on the Government to amend it. Another measure adopted by the Government was, the advance of loans to landlords for the improvement of their properties; but though a good measure, as far as it went, it was incapable of being extensively used in Ireland. A million and a half would go but a small way in improving land. He would prefer stimulating landlords to make improvements with their own means; and to give them the ability of doing so he would give them the power of borrowing money from the Government. These were the measures which he would suggest for the improvement of Ireland. It was a melancholy thing to see that country in her present condition, with the capability of maintaining twice or even three times her present population on the rotation system. There were 15,000,000 acres in Ireland, of which two-fifths, or 6,000,000 acres, were capable of producing corn. Under a proper system these 6,000,000 would produce 4,500,000 tons, or, at five quarters to the ton, 22,500,000 quarters, or three quarters for every head of the population, which was three times as much as would be required for the present population. This calculation was only on two-fifths of the land; the other three-fifths he would leave for pasture and vegetables. That was a proof that it was owing to the want of cultivation that Ireland was not capable of maintaining her present population, and it should stimulate the House and the Government to do everything in their power to promote the proper cultivation of the soil. The reclamation of the waste lands would give employment to the population in the ratio of 400,000 labourers for every 1,000,000 acres. He wished at present to confine his attention to the landed property of Ireland, and he would briefly mention the measures he wished to have passed: First, a Bill to relieve landed proprietors under entail, to enable them to charge the inheritance with the money expended upon improvements, and to grant sufficiently long leases to encourage the improvement of the land: a Bill for settling intermediate rights, and to provide the means by which the several intermediate holders for terminable leases should be enabled successfully to claim either a perpetuity or to sell their interest to the head landlord: a Bill for the amendment of the law relating to landlord and tenant: a Bill to give the State power to enter upon waste lands; and the State to sell the lands of defaulting proprietors to the poor-rate: and, lastly, an amendment of the Encumbered Estates Bill. The Government had not scrupled to set aside the usual barriers of the constitution in Ireland. If it were necessary to give such powers as those affecting the lives and liberties of the subject, he said it was equally necessary that extensive powers should be given in regard to the property of the people. Ireland was in a condition which required extraordinary measures like these, so as to secure the lives and property of the people. He would not wish to do the smallest injustice to any man; but he never would be discouraged from proposing such measures as these from the mere cry of an interference with the abstract rights of landlords. The hon. Gentleman concluded in the terms of his Motion.

Motion made and question proposed.

Sir W. SOMERVILLE said, it was impossible to deny that the subject which had been brought before the House by the hon. Gentleman, was one of very great importance; and it was equally impossible not to admire the perseverance with which the hon. Gentleman had brought forward and pressed upon the attention of the House, year after year, his favourite project for the amendment of the law of landlord and tenant in Ireland. Yet he (Sir W. Somerville) was surprised that his hon. Friend, after the long experience he had had of the business of the House, had contented himself with bringing forward an abstract proposition, the truth of which nobody doubted, instead of laying upon the table of the House a Bill embodying, in an intelligible shape, the object he had in view, and the manner in which he proposed to carry that object into effect. The hon. Gentleman had divided his address into two portions. First of all he described the unfortunate state of Ireland at the present moment, and contrasted the condition of one part of the country with another; and then he proceeded to detail at considerable length what measures he thought should be adopted for the purpose of improving Ireland generally. It was impossible, he (Sir W. Somerville) was sorry to say, to deny the truth of the picture which the hon. Gentleman had drawn of the state of affairs in the province of Connaught. That general distress and embarrassment prevailed in that province, could not be contravened, and the terrible condition of the pauper population was lamentable in the extreme. The hon. Member had contrasted the condition of the western counties with that of the county of Down, and argued that the more prosperous state of Down was owing to the existence there of his favourite system of tenant-right. Now he thought it would be difficult to trace the difference in the conditions of the Connaught counties and those of the north of Ireland to the variation in tenures of land in the two portions of the country. It would be admitted that what the hon. Member called tenant-right prevailed to a considerable extent in the county of Donegal, and yet the condition of that county was very nearly as bad as that of the most distressed counties in the west and south. The hon. Gentleman had also alluded to many other subjects, which were, no doubt, entitled to great consideration. One of these was the rundale system, than which a more pernicious system could not be found to exist in any part of the world—and no doubt, it ought, if possible, be got rid of. But how was it to be done? His hon. Friend, having drawn his picture of the state of the county, suggested the adoption of several measures which he thought would ameliorate its condition, and remedy the evils which prevailed. He had alluded to a law something like the Montgomery Act in Scotland, and seemed to be of opinion that such a measure would operate beneficially in Ireland. But he (Sir W. Somerville) would only say, in reference to the application of an Act of that kind to Ireland, that he entirely concurred in the view of the matter taken by the Members of the Earl of Devon's Commission, whose attention had been directed to the subject, and who were unanimously of opinion, that an Act like the Montgomery Act could not, with its machinery, be applied to Ireland in her present condition. He would not say that some such measure might not be desirable if machinery for carrying it out could be devised: but in that the difficulty lay. The hon. Gentleman also alluded to a Bill which had been introduced last Session by himself and another hon. Member, the object of which was to enable proprietors in fee to charge inheritors with any money expended in the improvement of their estates. And they proposed that the measure should be carried into effect by the machinery of the Board of Works. Now let them conceive what would have been the result of every landed proprietor in Ireland employing the officers of the Board of Works in order to ascertain what improvements were necessary on their property, and making themselves responsible for the outlay of money for those improvements; and then let them imagine what disputes and difficulties such a system would inevitably give rise to? Why, it would not have lasted a week, if it could have been applied at all; for the Government had experienced the greatest difficulty in managing the disposition, through the machinery of the Board of Works, of the 1,500,000*l*. which had been lent to Ireland to carry on works of utility in that country. He mentioned this as another proof of the difficulties which the Government had to contend against in making any attempt to do that which ought to be performed by individuals. The hon. Gentleman advised that some measure should be passed with the view of giving security to tenants for any outlays of money in the improvement of their holdings. Measures having a tendency to secure in some degree that object had been introduced at different times by Lord Stanley, and by the noble Earl the Member for the Falkirk district of burghs, and by himself during the last Session of Parliament; and he believed one or two similar measures were brought in by the hon. Member. Now, every one of these Bills had proved a failure, in consequence of the deficiency in the machinery wherewith effectively to carry them into operation. He would not say that he was deterred by these repeated failures, for he hoped, in the course of the present Session, to lay upon the table of the House a Bill, the object of which would be to secure to improving tenants the fruits of their industry. He had always been of opinion that voluntary arrangements between landlords and tenants were far better and more satisfactory than any arrangement of a compulsory character under the terms of an Act of Parliament; and he trusted that notwithstanding any law that might be passed on the subject, the voluntary—which was the most wholesome system—would as often as possible continue to be acted upon. But the hon. Member called upon the House to legislate upon the question of tenant-right, without defining what tenant-right was. For his (Sir W. Somerville's) own part, he had never heard a clear definition given of it. He had read several able pamphlets on the subject—one especially written by a Mr. Lamont, in which that gentleman—who, he believed, was a practical man—gave it as his opinion that it would be impossible to legalise tenant-right by legislation. He hardly knew whether he need touch upon the many other questions which had been adverted to by his hon. Friend. They all referred to matters of great importance. There was, for example, the question of reclaiming waste lands, and the question of arterial drainage—both of great importance. But, after all, the real question was, should waste lands be reclaimed and arterial drainage carried on by the Government? With respect to the reclamation of waste lands by Government, he did not know any measure which had lost so much ground in Ireland. [Mr. Bellew: Hear, hear!] The industrial resources of Ireland were imperfectly developed, and there was no doubt her soil, if properly cultivated, was capable of feeding in comfort a much larger population than her present one; but that was not the question they had to deal with now. He thought that however desirable it might be to proceed with these works, that the principle of leaving them to private enterprise ought not to be departed from. He had further to state, that it was his intention in the course of the present Session to introduce a Bill to provide for the conversion of renewable leasehold property in Ireland into tenancies in fee; and also a Bill, the object of which would be to amend the Irish grand jury law; both of which measures he hoped would prove beneficial to that country. He trusted that the House would be content with what he had stated it was his intention to do; and that they would not sanction the resolution of the hon. Member, which pointed to nothing practical, and which, if agreed to, would possibly tend to raise hopes which might never be fulfilled.

Mr. O'FLAHERTY agreed with the right hon. Baronet that it was not wise to create hopes which might not be realised, yet he thought much credit was due to his hon. Friend who proposed this Motion, for his perseverance in pressing his views on the Government, many of which, if carried out, would be very useful. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Louth cheered the right hon. Baronet when he said that the question of the reclamation of the waste lands had lost ground in Ireland. It might be well for the hon. Member for Louth, which was all reclaimed, to entertain such an opinion; but if the hon. Gentleman went further to the west, he would see that waste lands might be cultivated with great advantage. He had done so himself in the west of Ireland with success. He hoped the right hon. Baronet would not fail in bringing forward the measures he indicated at an early day. There was now an opportunity of doing much good for Ireland; but he thought that every proposition for the improvement of the country would best emanate from the Government. If the Committee upstairs were allowed to perform their duty fairly to the country, it would show what the evils of Ireland were, and would suggest the proper remedies for their removal. He hoped they would be allowed the opportunity of doing so.

Mr. J. O'CONNELL said, it was a comfort to know that it was the intention of Government to bring forward some of the measures referred to by his hon. Friend. When the right hon. Baronet said that tenant-right prevailed in Donegal to a great extent, and yet that it was in a lamentable condition, while the county of Down was comparatively prosperous, he ought to have told the House that the tenant-right which existed in Donegal was a mere mockery, whereas the tenant-right of Down was real and well defined.

The right hon. Baronet said that it was impossible to define tenant-right. As far as words could define it, it was easy enough to do so—tenant-right being the right to sell the occupancy, the landlord being first paid out of the proceeds of the sale. He wished to see such a measure introduced by Government as would enable the small landholders, of whom there was an immense number, to lay out their money upon the land with the certain hope of being allowed to reap a return, without being every hour at the mercy of the landlord. This was one of the most necessary measures for Ireland, and this was one of those measures that would alleviate the miseries of the poor, and smooth the working of the poor-law. Various measures had been proposed for compensating tenants, but not one had been prosecuted with energy. They had been mocked with Bills which were brought in only to be abandoned. As his hon. Friend had but little chance of carrying his Motion, he would recommend him to withdraw it, but on the distinct understanding that Ministers were pledged to introduce a Bill which would go to the root of the evil, sufficiently early to insure its being carried in the present Session.

VISCOUNT BERNARD agreed so far with the hon. Member for Limerick as to recommend the hon. Member for Rochdale to withdraw his Motion. He did so, however, on different grounds from that hon. Member, for he believed, if it were adopted by the House, hopes would be raised in Ireland which could never be realised. If at any time there was a Bill brought in which went to infringe the rights of property, under pretence of establishing a tenant-right in Ireland, he (Viscount Bernard) should feel it his duty to oppose it. As a resident Irish landlord he had no hesitation in saying that the question of tenant-right was used as a purely political engine in Ireland. The wisest course for Parliament to pursue, in his opinion, would be to let the matter alone. To legislate in such a spirit for that portion of the Irish tenantry holding small patches of land not sufficient to support their families, would be but to perpetuate the misery of Ireland. On this question he thought the Government ought to take the responsibility of originating measures, and not leave them to individual efforts. At present Parliament had been sitting three or four weeks, and though there was the greatest anxiety in Ireland to know what was to be done with the poor-law, the Government had not declared its intentions. Nothing was known except that the noble Lord at the head of the Government meant to submit a proposition to the Committee now sitting, which was generally objected to in Ireland. The hon. Member for Rochdale had offered many suggestions which, if embodied in Bills, would take several months to prepare; but Ireland required an immediate remedy for the evils that afflicted her. The only one, however, proposed was a Tenant Bill and a Grand Jury Bill. The measure wanted was neither one nor the other, but a measure which would give employment to the poor, and save the people from starving. The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland had promised a deputation that lately waited on him, that he would strongly recommend the question of Irish railways to the Government. He (Viscount Bernard) hoped the Government would consider of it, and adopt the project laid before the House by the lamented Lord G. Bentinck last year. The right hon. Secretary for Ireland had alluded to the subject of arterial drainage; but arterial drainage was not proceeding in Ireland, because of the want of funds for the purpose. There was a difficulty under the present Act, and if Her Majesty's Government would only lend the money required upon sufficient security, arterial drainage would be recommenced. The fisheries of Ireland might be made most valuable and productive, if greater encouragement was given to railways. A large sum had been voted for the piers and harbours of Ireland, of which 40,000*l.* were still unexpended. The Government should promote the erection of piers and the construction of harbours in those places where they were most wanted. In reference to the Grand Jury Bill, there could be no difficulty in bringing it forward. The greater portion of the sums spent by grand juries in Ireland were not under their control, and it would be better to hand over the expenditure of the roads to the poor-law guardians, so as to enable them to anticipate pressure, and support the people in periods of distress. The noble Lord at the head of the Government should have also stated what course was intended with respect to the formation of new unions in Ireland, for that was a point of the greatest importance. The country was anxious to know whether the report of the Boundary Commission was to be adopted as regarded the workhouses of those unions, as well as with respect to electoral divisions. No question in Ireland was so important as that which involved a decrease in the area of taxation for the poor-rate; and it was desirable that the country should understand distinctly what was to be done on the subject. At present there was a suspension of all expenditure upon estates until that question was settled, lest the parties might find themselves placed in a position that would oblige them to support the poor of neighbouring unions. The Landed Estates Improvement Act would have done more good if it had been more extended. The great evil was the establishment of collective responsibility with individual means of assistance. He suggested that assistance should be given to the farmers in the way of agricultural instruction while there was yet time before the spring. The agricultural instructors sent out by Lord Clarendon last year had done the greatest good to the country; and nothing but the failure of the crops could have prevented the best effects from their efforts. The misery of Ireland was the immense number of children at present in the workhouses. These children, he suggested, should be sent to the colonies; by this means the occupying farmer would be immensely relieved, while a safe foundation would be laid for the future permanent welfare of the poor little emigrants. He was by no means opposed to the principle of the poor-law; on the contrary, he acted as chairman of a board of guardians, and had done all in his power to administer its provisions in an effective manner. They would find it utterly impracticable to give anything to the outdoor pauper without the chance of fraud. In one instance, when outdoor relief was announced, the whole parish became suddenly afflicted, and the whole population became candidates for public relief. The question of the poor-law required revision. He urged the question on the Government, not to embarrass them, but to induce them to remove that amount of uncertainty from the minds of the Irish people, in consequence of Government not stating what their intentions were.

Mr. REYNOLDS said, it had been the habit of English Members of Parliament, and of English newspapers, to charge Irish Members with never submitting comprehensive measures to the House: after the serious and comprehensive speech of the noble Lord (Viscount Bernard) that charge could not be made at least against him. He had suggested various measures, and so numerous, that his (Mr. Reynolds') memory could not easily follow him. The noble Viscount found fault with the hon. Member for Rochdale that he had submitted no comprehensive measure. Yet that hon. Member had advised—first, a measure for emancipating the land, and, second, a measure on tenant-right. But the noble Lord found fault with all. He wondered that the noble Viscount had not said more respecting arterial drainage, as he (Mr. Reynolds) recollected about two years ago being one of an auditory of 700, who listened attentively to a speech made by the noble Viscount at an agricultural meeting held in the city of Cork. The noble Viscount was then supported by Mr. Smith, of Deanston, whose name was pretty well associated with arterial and other drainage. The noble Viscount appeared to be Smith-bitten, and roundly asserted that Ireland wanted nothing but drainage. "Drain her properly," cried the noble Viscount, "let us have plenty of drainage—nothing like drainage—thorough drainage," was the never-dying refrain of the noble Viscount's song. At last, a native of that beautiful and famous city cried out, "Let us have no more of that, my Lord; we are ruined by drainage destroyed by drainage, it is our misfortune that ,we are too much drained." The fact was, that although drainage, doubtless, was a good thing, it might be, like all other good things, carried too far. Fault had been found with his hon. Friend (Mr. S. Crawford) for taking up the time of the House with this resolution; but, if no other good had been done, it had, at least, drawn from the Government the announcement of three measures. He had greatly regretted to hear from the hon. Baronet the Secretary for Ireland, that considerable apathy prevailed with regard to the reclamation of waste lands; but he believed it might be easily accounted for. The destruction of the potato crop, and other calamities, had rendered valuable land nearly valueless; but there was a fact which the House ought never to forget, namely, that out of the 20,000,000 acres of Ireland, 7,000,000 were uncultivated, and that, out of the latter, 5,000,000 were capable of reclamation. And yet, notwithstanding this enormous quantity of land lying waste, they forced the labourers, by tyrannical and unnatural means, to cross the Atlantic. He deprecated forced emigration, whilst so much land at home was lying waste. The hon. Member for South Lancashire (Mr.

W. Brown), a merchant and a banker, with extensive connexions in America, as well as in this country, had that day told him that money to the amount of 51,000*l.* had been remitted from the United States in the past year, through their house, from 8,000 Irish emigrants, in sums varying from 1*l.* to 30*l.*, to assist their relations in Ireland to emigrate likewise. The driving of such an industrious class of labourers from the country, was, in his opinion, opening an artery in the prosperity of Ireland, and bleeding it to death. [*A laugh.*] That might excite laughter, but ere long its results would give rise to a very different feeling. As some remarks had been made derogatory to the Committee upstairs on Irish distress, he might perhaps be allowed to say that he entertained great hopes that, so far from doing nothing, that Committee would lay the foundation of a better system of poor-law in Ireland. He denounced many of the agitators against the present poor-law as desirous of repealing the law altogether, and throwing paupers on the paupers for support. He remembered when hundreds of thousands of paupers were supported exclusively by the poor; but a return to that system was now impracticable. He was opposed to any disturbance of the principle of the poor-law, as he believed it was the poor man's charter. It was too often, however, made the rich man's warrant for the purpose of depopulating the country. But while he wished to see alterations made in the present law, he was not of those who made alteration a mere pretext under which they concealed the strongest desire to have the law repealed altogether. He repeated it, there were those in that House who, while pretending to seek the alteration only of the law, would use every means in their power to have it totally repealed. The noisiest opponents of the poor-law were those who formerly spent their incomes in foreign countries, left the management of their estates to their stewards, and surrounded their lands with stone walls twelve feet high, illustrated at intervals with boards, exhibiting in plain Roman capitals the words, "Spring guns and man traps set here." This class of landowners were now very rare; and he trusted that the House would never permit the principle of the poor-law to be disturbed. He concluded by thanking his hon. Friend (Mr. S. Crawford) for having submitted his Motion to the House.

MR. MONSELL said, that his hon. Friend who had just sat down was somewhat older than he was, and, therefore, he might have more experience in Ireland; but, for his own part, he had never seen any of those "spring guns and man traps," for keeping off the poor from a landlord's estate, to which his hon. Friend had alluded. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman had not even seen them himself, but had only read of them. Instead of following the various extraneous topics which had been submitted to the House, he would recall attention to the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Rochdale, and to the observations founded thereon of his right hon. Friend the Secretary for Ireland. He was glad to hear from his right hon. Friend that it was his intention to introduce the three measures he had mentioned; and he was sure his right hon. Friend would frame his Landlord and Tenant Bill so as to render it beneficial to the country to which it was to be applied. His principal object in rising was, to express his regret that his right hon. Friend had not declared his intention of introducing another measure, and one of vital importance. He referred to a Bill for the management of estates, vested in the Court of Chancery in Ireland. His right hon. Friend was aware of the extent of these estates—he was aware of the way in which they were managed—and he was also aware that the tenants were in a state of the most abject wretchedness; that they had no hope—no inducement toward the improvement of their miserable condition, because they had no leases. He (Mr. Monsell) trusted that the Government would not allow many months of the present Session to elapse without bringing in a Bill for this purpose. His hon. Friend the Member for Middlesex had moved for certain returns on this subject; and, therefore, the question was before the House. He hoped the Government would at once take up the matter; and he was sure that his right hon. Friend (Sir W. Somerville), with the able assistance of the eminent person who was now Chancellor of Ireland, would be able to mature a measure which would confer great and lasting benefit on the country.

MR. R. M. FOX thought that the cultivation of waste lands in Ireland, although some years ago it would have been a very feasible project, was now wholly impracticable. The free-trade policy which had been recently adopted by that House, had put it altogether out of the question that anything like success should attend on any such undertaking. The lands on which crops were heretofore raised in Ireland were passsing rapidly out of cultivation, such were the injurious effects to the agricultural interests of the free-trade measures; and if it was found impossible to keep the good land in cultivation, how vain would be the enterprise of seeking to reclaim the waste! The project would never pay, and it would be idle to think of it. He believed much advantage would be derived from an improved system of legislation between landlord and tenant; but the most useful suggestion, in his opinion, had been made upon that subject by the hon. Member for the University of Dublin. In England there were six laws to regulate the relations between landlord and tenant, while in Ireland there were sixty-three. He had no faith in the Bill temporarily passed last Session. The only effect it had, was to put a great deal of money into the pockets of lawyers and attorneys. He could not vote for the Motion, because he could not approve of the speech by which it had been accompanied, which professed to be explanatory of it.

Mr. S. CRAWFORD said, if the right hon. Baronet the Chief Secretary for Ireland recollected the number of Bills introduced upon the subject of landlord and tenant in Ireland, and the little success he (Mr. Crawford) had met with, he would not be surprised at the anxiety he felt upon the subject. It was not in the power of any individual Member to complete the necessary machinery for carrying a measure of that sort; and it was, therefore, of great importance that it should be undertaken by the Government. It was hoped they would also see the necessity of furthering the measure. As to the Motion before the House, it might entirely depend upon the promise of the right hon. Gentleman as to the time he would undertake, on behalf of the Government, to bring forward the three measures of which notice had been given. If the right hon. Gentleman promised to bring them forward within a reasonable time, he (Mr. Crawford) would not trouble the House by a division; but, if not, he would wish to take the opinion of the House upon the question under consideration.

Sir W. SOMERVILLE said, that two of the Bills were in a forward state, and would be shortly introduced in the other House. He had still his objections to call the other Bill a tenant-right Bill; but the other measure upon that subject would shortly be brought forward.

Mr. S. CRAWFORD, under those circumstances, would not trouble the House, and withdrew his Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

DUCHIES OF CORNWALL AND LANCASTER.

Mr. TRELAWNY moved—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire to what extent the public are entitled to claim an interest, present or prospective, in the management of the Duchies of Cornwall and Lancaster, respecting which returns are annually presented to the House, and whether there is not reason to hope, from those returns, as well as other circumstances, that an improvement in the management of those estates in particular, by the suppression of antiquated and superfluous offices, and the diminution of the salaries of officials, would greatly increase the joint net income of the two duchies."

The hon. Gentleman said, that the last time he had made a Motion on this subject, the noble Lord at the head of the Government had met him by saying, that he (Mr. Trelawny) had admitted that the affairs of these duchies had been much better managed of late than they had been before; but it did not follow from that admission that they might not be still better managed; and, from the returns which had been presented, it appeared that a very large saving might be effected. He had been misunderstood by those who supposed that it was his object to sell the property of these duchies, and appropriate the proceeds to the public service, though he should not have wanted a precedent for such a recommendation, as it was proposed by Mr. Burke, in his speech on economical reform. His only wish was to enrich the Duke of Cornwall by an amount of 50,000*l.* a year; and he believed that this sum could be saved by a better system of management, which at the same time would benefit the public generally, and particularly the public in the western parts of the country. Any solicitor would tell hon. Members that it was impossible to find an estate in any other part of the country so ill and so arbitrarily managed as the estates of the duchy of Cornwall. It was a fact well known to all gentlemen who were conversant with the tenure of land, and the state of property, in the duchy of Cornwall, that over any estate in that duchy, which had paid but threepence in the nature of a quit rent or acknowledgment of any kind, 300 or 400 or even 500 years ago, the duchy had often enforced its power of dispossessing the present holder. It was true that by a Bill passed not many Sessions since, this term was restrained within 125 years; but even that limitation only showed the arbitrary and oppressive character of the right thus exercised. He held in his hand a variety of returns of the several items of the revenue and expenditure of both the duchies for the years 1837 and 1848. Without troubling the House by recapitulating them, he would recur only to a few, from whence it appeared that against an aggregate revenue of 50,395*l.*, the aggregate of expenditure was 20,816*l.*, including the salaries of a receiver-general, an auditor, a chancellor, bailiffs, clerks, counsel, an attorney-general, &c. It was in these useless and highly-paid offices that the revenues were dissipated: 40,915*l.* were raised in one year in the duchy of Lancaster; but a vast amount of the sum in like manner was distributed among such a variety of officials and law officers with sounding names, and chief officers and other bearers, that the affair appeared to him absolutely childish altogether. It was like playing at a king and his ministers. The returns for 1847 showed some little improvement on those of 1836-7. There was certainly an improved management and an economised expenditure exhibited in them as compared with their predecessors. But his object was to submit the whole of these accounts to a Committee of the House, in whose hands a judicious and profitable management of these properties could not fail to be devised. He was satisfied that at a time when the exigencies of the public service were forcing the adoption of retrenchment and economy in every department—when Parliament had so recently induced the Government to reform, and reduce the Navy and other estimates—it would be deemed by hon. Members highly inexpedient that the estates of the Prince, who was Duke of Cornwall and Lancaster, and heir to the Throne, should be managed in the wasteful and unproductive manner he had more particularly pointed out upon a former occasion. He knew it might be urged as an objection to his Motion by the Members of Her Majesty's Government, that the House had no right to investigate these accounts at all—that the lands and estates on which the revenues in question were raised, were the private property of the Duke of Cornwall. His reply to that question would be a very simple one. If (he would say) you deny the right of Parliament to exercise any supervision over, or institute any inquiry into, these matters, on what principle do you annually publish those accounts? The fact of publication supposed as well as invited such inquiry. Every hon. Gentleman then present must know, moreover, how difficult, not to say impossible, it was to manage, himself, his own estate to any advantage or profit. On what principle could it be contended that the estate of the Duke of Cornwall or the Duke of Lancaster was exempted from a similar liability when left to such an irresponsible sort of management as that by which it was now administered? The hon. Gentleman having read a passage from a tract by Mr. Burke, written eighty years ago, contended, on that authority, that any trusts of a public or official nature exercised out of the control and supervision of Parliament, were calculated only to expose those to whom they were delegated to unnecessary temptation, and argued that the principle was clearly applicable to the present case. He concluded by moving the appointment of a Committee in the terms above stated.

Mr. HUME seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and question proposed.

LORD J. RUSSELL said, that when, on a former day, he had addressed to the House those considerations upon which he was of opinion that the Motion of the hon. Member (Mr. Trelawny) was one that ought not to be complied with, he had not stated with sufficient clearness, he feared, the principal reasons which had impressed him with that conviction. He meant to have then stated that, on the last settlement of the civil list, it was competent to the Crown to have surrendered, upon any arrangement that might have been deemed satisfactory, the revenues of one of these duchies. But Parliament, at that time, did not think fit to adopt such a proposition; and he had no doubt that this might have been so with regard to the duchy of Lancaster; but the duchy of Cornwall was not an analogous case, for the lands of that duchy became the private property of the Prince of Wales at the moment of his birth. It was clear, therefore, that the Crown could not make any arrangement with respect to those revenues which would be prejudicial to the rights and interests of the Prince of Wales in his character of Duke of Cornwall. Now, in point of fact, he was prepared to say, that whatever imputation of defective management might formerly have applied to the administration of the revenues of these duchies of Lancaster and Cornwall, that management had of late years very considerably improved, and was at the present moment, he believed, on the whole satisfactory; whilst those occasional acts of vexation or injustice which were alleged to have been committed under the system pursued in former years, had now ceased to exist. When the hon. Gentleman brought forward a similar proposition, on a former occasion, he did not clearly state what the precise object was that he then contemplated; and certainly that object had been on the present occasion not less vaguely expressed. At one time the hon. Gentleman seemed to state his object to be this, namely, to show that the management of these revenues might be very materially improved, and their amount increased, under a different system of administration; but at another, his object appeared rather to obtain a Committee that should recommend the appropriation of these revenues of the duchies to the public service. And now he came forward to show that so large a sum might be saved out of a more economical management of these revenues as would save the country a considerable portion of the charge which it might expect at a future period to be called upon to meet for the future allowance of the Prince of Wales. But he (Lord J. Russell) must submit that, without the direct consent of the Crown, these revenues could not be at all interfered with; and that that House would never sanction an attempt at such interference in the absence of that sanction. The hon. Gentleman had alleged that a great number of cases of extreme hardship had occurred by reason of the defective management of these revenues, and that therefore the Committee of Investigation for which he had moved, ought to be granted to him. It would, however, be surely very unjust, on general charges of this nature, to refuse to the Crown the right of managing its own estates, or to take from the Duke of Cornwall the same authority over his. And, again, if the House were not prepared to go the whole length of the hon. Gentleman's proposal, which would extend, in fact, to take away either the property or the control of it from its owner, he could not see the expediency of going into a Committee at all to investigate the question how far the expenses of the management of this property or the alteration of these revenues might be economised. The safer plan, therefore, would be not to grant the Committee. He believed, as to the annual production of these accounts on which the hon. Gentleman had attempted to raise an argument in favour of his Motion, that the real object with which they had been ordered by a former Government was, that their periodical production might operate as a very salutary check on the management in question. That was the understanding on which this plan of publication was first adopted; but it was never meant to convey that sort of right of control over these revenues which the hon. Gentleman had assumed in his speech. If those revenues are private property, as the hon. Gentleman admits they are, I can see no reason why we should interfere, especially as the hon. Gentleman produces no proof of mismanagement of the revenues but a speech of Mr. Burke. Now, though those remarks of Mr. Burke might have been justified in 1780, I think the hon. Gentleman overrates his observations if he thinks that that fact is sufficient to justify the appointment of a Committee in 1849. The hon. Gentleman has not given any proof that the abuses which existed in 1780 exist in 1849, and therefore I cannot see the reason for his Motion. The salaries stated to be given to the officers of the duchies may seem to be very large in proportion to those given by private gentlemen to parties holding similar offices on small properties, but I do not know that they are so as compared with large properties. Indeed, I believe some agents upon large properties get quite as much, if not more, than these officers. I know an instance in my own family where one gentleman, for merely giving his advice on legal affairs, got 2,000*l.* a year; and I believe other persons are paid as well on other estates. The titles of persons holding office under the Crown may be more high-sounding; but I much doubt whether the sums they receive are larger, if as large. Without the consent of the Crown, it could not be submitted to the interposition of that House; and assuredly the Crown would not be a party to any arrangements that could have the effect of damaging the interests and the rights of the Duke of Cornwall. By the law of the land these duchies are the property of the Crown, and, according to the practice and usage of Parliament, they cannot be taken away without the consent of the Crown. The hon. Gentleman has made out no case for that consent being asked, and has in fact given no proof of the existence of any abuses in 1848, with the exception of the speech of Mr. Burke, delivered in 1780, and he hoped the House would not assent to the Committee.

Mr. POLE CAREW was in favour of the appointment of the Committee, because he was desirous of supporting the Crown, and that it should not be placed in the painful position it now was, with regard to the inhabitants of the duchy of Cornwall, in the collection of the revenue, almost literally in pence and halfpence. That was a position in which the Crown ought not to be placed. The noble Lord at the head of the Government said these duchies were private property. Let the Crown give up its privileges connected with them. The Crown ought not to claim royal privileges when it proceeded against an individual, and then, when Parliament asked for a control over the estates, turn round and say it was private property. There was no person connected with Cornwall who was not aware of the injurious operation which the present system of managing these duchies exercised on the rights of tenants and landlords. He had been much astonished to hear the allusion made by the noble Lord to his noble relative. The two cases were not at all analogous. The Duke of Bedford was not likely to come before that House and beg it to make good the deficiencies of his own income; and, if he were to do so, the House would tell him to economise his means, by reducing such allowances as 1,000*l.* here, 3,000*l.* there, and 5,000*l.* in another quarter. Now, the Duke of Cornwall was very likely, on the other hand, to be before that House very soon with some such application, and hence it was the interest of Parliament to see that his revenues were economically administered. If the noble Lord would allow the appointment of a Committee, he (Mr. P. Carew) would undertake to show such instances of intolerable oppression on the part of the duchy, that the House would insist on having Parliamentary control over it.

Mr. HUME thought the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) had not taken a very fair view of the case in comparing the charge of management of the Duke of Bedford's property with that of the Crown. The property in these duchies was not of a private nature, but it was public property, held in trust, and in the proper administration of which the House was deeply interested. He (Mr. Hume) knew that King William the Fourth sent down a message to that House in which he gave up all the Crown revenues; and it was clearly understood at the time that the duchies of Cornwall and Lancaster were to be given up. It was found, however, that this could not be done with respect to the duchy of Cornwall, as the revenue of it was always settled on the eldest son of the Sovereign; but with regard to the duchy of Lancaster, he had always understood that the Ministers gave up that duchy. All, however, that he (Mr. Hume) succeeded in obtaining was a clause inserted in an Act of Parliament, providing that an annual return of the income and expenditure of the duchy should be laid before that House. The gross revenue of the duchy of Lancaster was 40,000*l.*, from which, however, 7,000*l.* was to be deducted, thus leaving 33,000*l.*; but, after deducting the charge of management and the salaries and allowances of the different officers, the whole amount which went to Her Majesty's privy purse was 12,000*l.* All the rest was completely wasted. When any demand was made on that House for aid and assistance for the maintenance of the Royal Family, it was right that the House should see that the property belonging to the Crown was properly managed. He would ask whether it was possible to find any private party having an estate, the expense of the management of which was such that only 12,000*l.* a year was received, as by the Crown, out of a revenue of 83,000*l.*? If the House would only appoint a Committee, he was sure that fifteen Members of that House could not be found to sit together and hear the evidence which would be given before them without their being satisfied that a much better management might be adopted for the revenues of the Crown, so that their amount might, within a short time, be tripled. The House was most deeply interested in the proper management of the revenue of the duchy of Cornwall, for some years ago they had repeatedly been called upon to vote immense amounts of money to George IV., when Prince of Wales. It appeared, when he ought to have received an income of from 40,000*l.* to 50,000*l.* a year from this duchy, hardly anything was obtained, as nearly all the revenue was consumed in pensions, salaries, and allowances. Some years ago a proceeding took place with regard to Cornwall, which he would only designate as a great cheat on the public. He was not in the House during the few weeks that the measure to which he alluded passed through it, or he should have strenuously opposed it. There were certain rates or rentals, or royalties, formerly paid on the metal obtained from the Cornish mines, which amounted to 15,000*l.* a year. The country Gentlemen of Cornwall, who were a numerous body, and who were united, and possessed great power, persuaded Her Majesty's Ministers to take off the charge on the produce of these mines, and put it on the Consolidated Fund. The result was, that at present a charge of 15,000*l.* a year was paid out of that fund to the trustees of the Prince of Wales. It appeared that Lord Campbell received 2,000*l.* a year out of the revenues of the duchy of Lancaster; and he (Mr. Hume) did not know what that noble and learned Lord had to do. Oh, he recollected that the noble Lord had to keep the seal of the duchy. There was also an auditor at 400*l.* a year. He found, besides, the name of George Edward Anson, who was described as axe-bearer and master of the game in Needwood Forest, with a salary of 300*l.* a year. He should like to know what income was derived from Needwood Forest, that it required an officer with a salary of 300*l.* to look after it. Perhaps it was like another forest, which he once got inquired into, and which it was found, instead of producing anything, though 300*l.* a year was paid to the keeper, cost the country 35*l.* annually. After a ten years' suit before Lord Hope —he thought it was—he believed his right hon. Friend below him (the Lord Advocate) was engaged in the case, and the result was, that nothing could be done. When they looked at such items as these, he considered that a clear case had been made out to call for inquiry. He did not think that Her Majesty's Ministers had acted properly in opposing this Motion, as it did not affect the revenue of the Crown, for all that was intended was, that this property should be administered in the best possible manner. His own belief was, that the real ground of objection to the Motion was the fear that it might interfere with the patronage of Ministers.

Mr. MILNER GIBSON observed, that an inquiry was now being carried on into a matter germane to the present subject. He alluded to the Committee appointed to inquire into the management of the Crown lands, and it was desirable that that Committee should have been appointed to inquire also into the duchies of Lancaster and Cornwall. He could not agree with the assumption that Parliament was not entitled to inquire into the affairs of these duchies, as they were administered under regulations embodied in Acts of Parliament, and they were vested in the Crown by Acts of Parliament, and it was to Parliament Government must go if they wished to have any alteration in the administration of the revenues. The officers connected with these duchies had duties to perform besides the management of the revenues, for separate courts existed in them for the administration of justice, which were under their control; they also had the power of imposing fees, and they enjoyed peculiar privileges, and possessed other extraordinary powers. When he took all these circumstances into consideration, he was satisfied there was not the slightest ground for Parliament not to insist upon having the fullest inquiry into the subject. He thought the matter of jurisdiction was much more important than the pecuniary considerations involved in the question. He should have thought that Her Majesty's Government would have been glad to assent to such an inquiry as was proposed, with the view to the improved management of this property.

Mr. RICARDO thought that it would be most advantageous that some inquiry should take place as to the pecuniary matters involved in the subject, although he confessed he was not well acquainted with this part of the question. He saw, however, the absolute necessity of inquiry since the hon. Member for East Cornwall stated that he was prepared to prove cases of gross oppression and injustice against the persons entrusted with the management of the affairs of one of these duchies. He (Mr. Ricardo) knew, with regard to his own constituents, of a case of tyranny which no private individual would have dared to have perpetrated. The case was this: Some of the mines belonging to the duchy of Lancaster were under the town of Stoke-upon-Trent; and, in consequence of the mode of working them, many of the houses were undermined and fell down. He believed that between thirty and forty houses had fallen down in that town and its vicinity, and the parties who owned or occupied them could obtain no redress from the authorities of the duchy of Lancaster, and they were refused any compensation for the losses they had sustained. This, surely, was a fair case for Parliamentary inquiry. The noble Lord at the head of the Government had said that this was private property, into the management of which they had no right to inquire; but he could not convince his constituents that they had not had gross injustice inflicted on them on the part of the Crown. When they saw that the Chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster was a Cabinet Minister, and the property of these duchies mixed up with the Government of the country, they thought they were entitled to a Parliamentary inquiry, with the view of seeing whether they were still to be exposed to such tyranny, without being able to obtain the slightest redress. He did not for a moment anticipate that the Motion for inquiry would have been resisted.

SIR G. GREY wished to say a few words with respect to the particular case just alluded to by his hon. Friend. Application had been made to him (Sir G. Grey), from the constituents of his hon. Friend, and he had received a deputation from them, when, in reply to their representations, he stated that the question in dispute did not depend upon the property belonging to the Crown. The question was as to whether the person possessing the ownership of the surface of the land, had the right to prevent the owners of mines mining for ore which was under the surface. The parties who built on this land knew—or at least ought to have known—that mines would be worked under the surface of the land on which they had built. This question had been determined in a court of justice. The case might be a hard one, and the law of the land might require alteration; but this had nothing to do with the question before the House. The point referred to by his hon. Friend did not involve any peculiar right of the Crown, for the same right belonged to private individuals the owners of mines.

The EARL of LINCOLN said, having been alluded to more than once in the course of the debate, and having been for the last eight years connected with the duchy of Cornwall, and for the last two years with the duchy of Lancaster, perhaps the House would allow him to say a few words on this question. The right hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Milner Gibson) appeared to think that he had established a ground for inquiry because another inquiry, germane, in his opinion, to this one, was going on in another Committee upstairs with regard to the management of the Crown property by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests. Surely the hon. Member could hardly have looked at the matter with that acumen which every one knew he possessed, or with that impartiality which usually characterised him, or he would have seen that there was a manifest and strong difference between the two cases. The interest which the public possessed in the Crown property under the management of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests was patent to everybody. The net proceeds of those possessions of the Crown were paid annually into the Exchequer, and, therefore, the interest which the public had in that property being well administered was considerable. But the two duchies stood in quite a distinct position: they were not at all germane to the Crown property in question; for in one of those duchies, the public, as he should presently show, had no interest whatever; and in the other there was indeed a contingent interest, but one of a very remote date indeed. The hon. Gentleman who made the Motion (Mr. Trelawny) complained of the noble Lord at the head of the Government for having, when he brought forward a similar Motion on a former occasion, stated that the hon. Gentleman wished to sell the property of the duchies. Well, but now the hon. Gentleman had had an opportunity of explaining his views, and as far as he (the Earl of Lincoln) could collect, it was precisely as the noble Lord had stated. The hon. Gentleman said that he believed great advantage would arise to the public from the sale of the property of these duchies; and though he did not state on the present occasion that his object was the immediate sale of these properties, yet with great candour and fairness the hon. Gentleman had shown that his object in moving for a Committee was with a view to their ultimate sale. Now, it was essential that he should show to the hon. Gentleman that the public possessed no right of sale in these properties. The hon. Member for Manchester stated that he conceived it was the distinct right of the public to inquire into the management of the duchy properties, because not only did they possess privileges given by Act of Parliament, but that the duchies themselves were managed under Act of Parliament. Now, if that gave a right to the Legislature to interfere, he would beg the hon. Gentleman who claimed such a right of interference to tell him how many private properties there were which might not be interfered with on the same plea. He would ask the hon. Gentleman what more reason there was for interfering with the management of the duchies—a reason based on the fact that the duchies were regulated by Acts of Parliament — than for interfering with those great properties—he took those instances, because the public had an interest in them, though not of a pecuniary nature, and would long continue to have one—the properties of Strathfieldsaye and Blenheim. [Mr. MILNER GIBSON: Their royalties are confirmed under the provisions of an Act of Parliament.] Well, he would come to that, and he would show that that supplied no *locus standi* for the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Member for Tavistock made the same statement; in fact, that was the principal basis of his argument. The right hon. Member for Manchester expressly stated this ground, and so did the hon. Member for East Cornwall. [Mr. CAREW: No.] I beg the hon. Member's pardon. I took down his words.

MR. CAREW: If the noble Lord will allow me, I will tell him what I did say. I said there was a difference between the management of the estates of the Duke of Bedford and the Prince of Wales, as in the latter the nation might be called upon to make good any deficiency.

The EARL of LINCOLN continued: He was much obliged to the hon. Member for repeating his observation. He would not forget that argument presently, but he would forgive him for saying that he took down his words, and he understood the hon. Gentleman to state distinctly, as one ground for interference, that the duchy of Cornwall possessed royal privileges. Now, there were estates without end which were in possession of royal privileges; and would they say that the establishment of these royal privileges, such as the navigation of a river or the right of fishing, would give a right of interference as to the management of these estates by a Committee of this House? He was really afraid to enter into the question at too great length; but as this was the second time even during the present short Session of Parliament that the question had been brought before them, perhaps the House would forgive him for considering the question with some little care. In considering the question, he thought it was better that the two duchies should be taken separately, as they stood upon a totally different footing. The hon. Gentleman who made the Motion had placed it upon three separate grounds. The first was to what extent the public had an interest in these properties. Now, with regard to the first of these properties — the duchy of Cornwall — he would tell the hon. Gentleman that he would distinctly show him that the present interest of the public in the duchy of Cornwall was nil. He thought he could also show him exactly what was the prospective interest of the public, and how little that entitled this House to interfere. How stood the case with regard to the duchy of Cornwall? The tenure was a very peculiar one. It was granted by Edward III. to the Black Prince—it was granted by charter, which was afterwards confirmed by Act of Parliament. The grant ran in this form, that the property should be for ever vested in the Prince of Wales — or perhaps it would be more correct to say, in the Duke of Cornwall, because the Prince of Wales was a creation, whereas the eldest son of the Sovereign became Duke of Cornwall at his birth; and it was to continue vested in him till his death, or accession to the Throne. On his accession to the Throne, if he had a son, the duchy became immediately vested in the son. If he had no son, it became vested in the Sovereign till the birth of a son. The hon. Gentleman admitted that this was a correct statement, and from these few words he would see that the public could have no present interest in the property. As to the prospective interest, it was simply this, that in the event of the Prince of Wales not having a son when he succeeded to the Throne, and consequently the duchy of Cornwall becoming vested in him as Sovereign, it would then be competent for him, and for the Parliament of that time, to include the revenues of the duchy in the arrangements with regard to the civil list. But how could they do that? They could not do it as Crown property—they could not do it as they could the duchy of Lancaster, to which he would come presently, but simply and solely until the time that a son was born to him. Therefore, the present interest of the public in the property was nothing, and the prospective interest was very little; for what advantage could there be in an arrangement which would have no permanence after the birth of a son to the Sovereign? The hon. Gentleman had laid great stress upon the return with regard to the revenues being annually laid before Parliament. Now, he would tell the hon. Gentleman how this arose, and if his humble opinion were of any weight, he would say that in the case of the duchy of Cornwall these returns were very unnecessary, so far as the public was concerned. Yet he did not regret that they were presented, because he thought that every publicity as to the administration of the property was advantageous rather than the reverse to the duchy itself. It was done when Lord Monteagle, then Mr. Spring Rice, was Chancellor of the Exchequer; and, looking to the interest—small and remote as it was—which the public had in the property, he thought it right that these returns should be annually presented. But it was never contemplated at the time, nor was it thought of till within these last few years, that by these returns the public had obtained a right of interference. Having stated what that interest was, he would now come to the point which was put clearly and distinctly by the hon. Member for East Cornwall, and which had been hinted at by other Gentlemen. That hon. Member thought the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) had made a mistake in comparing this property with that of the Duke of Bedford, because the public had no interest in the management of the estates of the Duke of Bedford, while they had this interest at least in the management of the estates of the Duke of Cornwall, that in the event of these estates being ill-managed during his minority, it was possible, when he came of age, that the Crown might demand a sum of money to make up the deficiency. He admitted the public interest to that extent, and therefore it was he rejoiced that these returns were ordered; but when he came to that part of the question, he thought he should be able to show the hon. Gentleman, and those who complained of the management of the property of the duchy, that in reality the sources of complaint arose not so much from the mismanagement of the revenue, as from cases of individuals who felt themselves aggrieved by the assertion of the rights of the property. But these questions must be settled elsewhere than in that House, for they had no right to deal with the question here, except they could show that the management of the property was hostile to the interest of the public. Now what was the case with regard to the management of this property? He would not go back to ancient times, as the hon. Gentleman had done, to the days of Burke; but when the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Trelawny) said that if a Committee was granted he would expose some cases of arbitrary management and tyranny, he (the Earl of Lincoln) was inclined to ask the hon. Gentleman why he had not stated some of these cases then? [Mr. TRELAWNY: I shall state them next week, when I mean to renew this Motion.] Really in that case he pitied Her Majesty's Government, who had so much important business to transact. A similar Motion to the present was brought forward a week ago; here it was again to-night; and now they had got an intimation that it was to be repeated that day week. He was sorry he was not aware of the hon. Member's intentions earlier, otherwise he would have reserved his speech till then. The hon. Gentleman stated that the management of the property was arbitrary and tyrannical. He had not stated any cases, and therefore he (the Earl of Lincoln) thought it fair to assume that if the hon. Gentleman stated instances, as his more rash friend the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent had done, he would have received as satisfactory an answer as the right hon. Baronet the Home Secretary had given to the hon. Member (Mr. Ricardo). But he could not undertake to answer cases of tyranny or arbitrary management which were stated only in general terms. As to the mismanagement of these estates, let them see, without going back to former times, what was the state of the matter at present. There was at present a council, consisting of six members; and they certainly found, when they came into office, that the whole property had been grossly mismanaged. It had been treated as a means of extracting as much as possible for the existing possessor, without looking to the benefit of the property. The system that was adopted, and which was originated by the late Viscount Duncannon, was now rigidly persevered in, by which system, the former one, so prejudicial both to landlord and tenant, of granting leases on lives present or prospective, was altogether done away with. Instead of this no fines were now received; and as lives had fallen in, the property was let on leases for a term of years. This system, he had no doubt, would eventually—he would not say in what term of years—place the Prince of Wales in a perfectly independent position as regarded income. The hon. Gentleman had stated that he would undertake to show to the Committee that the revenue of the duchy of Cornwall might be increased by 50,000*l.* a year. [Mr. TRELAWNY: I said both duchies.] Well, perhaps the hon. Member would state in his Motion of next week what portion of this he expected from the duchy of Cornwall, and what from the duchy of Lancaster. But he would hint to the hon. Member that it was quite unnecessary to have a Committee for this purpose—it was giving him (Mr. Trelawny) a great deal of trouble. The hon. Gentleman had only to communicate to him (the Earl of Lincoln) or any other Member of the Council, how this 50,000*l.*, or even 20,000*l.*, might be obtained, and provided it could be done with equity and fairness to the landlords and others connected with Cornwall, and to the tenants of the duchy, it would be instantly adopted. Whilst he was upon this subject of leases, he might mention that so rigidly was this system carried out, that even with regard to the minerals, though in that case it was necessary, as every one connected with mining operations knew—to levy fines, yet the fines were carried to the account of the estate, and not to the immediate possessor. The hon. Gentleman would see that everything was done to place the present possessor of the duchy on advantageous terms both as to himself and as to the public. While he admitted there might exist cases of individual hardship, he totally denied the existence of any public grievance. He had now touched on two out of the three points for which the hon. Gentleman wished to have a Committee. The first referred to the extent to which the public were entitled to claim an interest in the duchies; the second referred to an improvement in their management; and the third, to which he now came, was in reference to the suppression of antiquated offices and diminution of the salaries of the officials. Now, as to this last question, he at once admitted that, long since the time of Mr. Burke, the hon. Gentleman might have pointed to gross abuses. But if the hon. Gentleman would but state the case candidly to the House, he would state that in the number and extent of these abuses there had been recently a great diminution; and he would add that no opportunity would be lost of removing those which may remain. In fact, since the birth of the Prince of Wales, every office that could be suppressed had been suppressed. As to the management of the property, the public could claim no interest in the amount of salaries paid by the Prince of Wales, provided the succession were not prejudiced. But how did the matter stand? There was formerly a Lord Warden, with upwards of 1,000*l.* a year; that office had been held with that salary by the late Marquess of Hertford. At his death, the duties of Lord Warden being regulated by Act, and being therefore in the condition of requiring a total rearrangement—a rearrangement which would include various other matters were the office to be done away with—his Royal Highness Prince Albert was appointed to the post—but without any salary. During the life of the last Prince of Wales there was also a Chancellor of the Duchy, with a salary of 500*l.* The present holder of that situation was a gentleman respected and honoured by all who knew him—he meant Mr. Pemberton Leigh, who devoted his legal acumen and habits of business to the management of the duchy without any salary whatever. The hon. Gentleman alluded to a surveyor general and a receiver general; these offices were still held. At the accession of the Prince of Wales, however, the salary of the former was 1,600*l.* a year. It was now reduced to 1,000*l.*, and the emoluments of the receiver general were similarly curtailed. These offices, however, having been bestowed previously to the accession of Her Majesty, it was not thought right that they should be done away with until the death of the present holders, after which both offices would be abolished. As to the Council, the Members acted without any remuneration whatever. [Mr. HUME would rather have a paid and responsible official.] If the hon. Gentleman would only have a little patience, he would find that the arrangement already existing was perhaps that which he desired. There were six Members of Council and a Secretary—the latter, of course, being paid. The Council was composed of His Royal Highness Prince Albert, of the Chief Commissioner of Woods and Forests, who was an *ex officio* Member, of the Chancellor of the Duchy, of Mr. George Edward Anson, the keeper of Her Majesty's privy purse, and the treasurer of the Prince of Wales; and then there were two Members, who might be called the private Members of the Council, consisting of Lord Portman and himself (the Earl of Lincoln). Now, even upon the supposition that the present salaries were to be maintained, there were many private properties managed on as expensive a scale; but so completely had the Council felt that they were managing as trustees, that they had fixed the salaries at the minimum, so that he believed, upon the whole, that no property of the same extent, and under similar disadvantages as regards expense of management, was administered more economically—always excepting the two cases of high salaries which were to be reduced at the death of the present holders. Now, the hon. Gentleman had asked what had become of the revenues of the duchy? He replied that such a question, in his opinion, the hon. Gentleman had no right to put, but he believed he was speaking in strict conformity with the wishes of those who were most interested in the subject, when he said that there was not the slightest desire for any concealment in the matter. The whole net produce of the duchy was invested for the benefit of the holder. The hon. Gentleman went on to complain of the small increase in the income of the duchy ever since the introduction of the new system, although the system of changing from the receipt of fines to the system of abolishing fines and renewing leases for terms of years, must of necessity render the new plan less profitable for a time than if the old one had been retained; though eventually the revenue would be both greatly increased and rendered more equal and certain. But he could tell the hon. Gentleman why the balance-sheet had not looked so well during the last two or three years; and he thought that neither the hon. Gentleman nor the hon. Member for East Cornwall alluded to the circumstance. When he (the Earl of Lincoln) was in office, in the Woods and Forests, an Act was passed, called "the Assessionable Manors Commission Act." Previously to the passing of that Act, rights existed attached to the duchy property which pressed heavily upon the inhabitants of Cornwall. It was, therefore, with the view of promoting the mining and other interests of the county, that it was thought advisable to disentangle the rights of the duchy from those of the inhabitants of Cornwall, as it happened that the properties of the latter—the beautiful place of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Trelawny) for example—were often very inconveniently interlaced with the property of the duchy. Well, the Act in question had certainly been a great pull upon the purse of the duchy. Indeed, upwards of twenty thousand pounds had been spent in carrying out its provisions; but, eventually, he believed that the measure would be found to prove an excellent arrangement for the property; and he thought that when attacks were made upon the management of the duchy of Cornwall, it ought to be represented that although there had been abuses, and that although the rights of private individuals had been heretofore injured, yet that these abuses no longer existed, or, if they did, that they were merely remnants of the old system which was being swept away, and that there was every prospect that the property of the Duke of Cornwall would be arranged on terms which would be considered as perfectly fair and amicable by the inhabitants of the duchy. He had trespassed, perhaps, too long upon the House, but he would like to say a word on the duchy of Lancaster. The position of that duchy was not quite satisfactory; but the noble Lord (Lord Campbell) who now held the chancellorship of Lancaster was most anxious to remove every existing abuse, and to place everything on a satisfactory footing. It would not be forgotten that the Crown had manifested an anxious desire that the affairs of the duchy should be arranged in a manner as beneficial as possible; and two years ago, a council was appointed, not to assist Lord Campbell—for he needed no assistance—but under the idea that it was desirable to effect great improvement, which a permanent administrative body could devise. To this Council three or four of the leading Members of either House gave their gratuitous aid. The hon. Gentleman would not forget, with reference to the interest of the public in the duchy, that it stood on quite a different footing from the duchy of Cornwall, and different also from that of the other possessions of the Crown; and that during the life of her present Majesty the public could have no interest in the revenues. Perhaps the footing on which, in the event of a new accession to the Throne, it would be possible to put the Sovereign, could be so managed as to enable the Legislature to effect a readjustment of the civil list; but he would remind the hon. Gentleman opposite that he had made no opposition to the existing arrangement, although he had had it in his power to call the attention of the House to it on the accession of her present Majesty. Now, he had been asked, how much of the gross revenue of the duchy, upwards of 33,000*l.*, went into the privy purse. He would at once admit, that but a very small proportion found its way there, and that there was very considerable room for improvement. Still he believed that no Committee could possibly place the duchy on the footing on which it ought to stand. That object could only be effected by perseverance in a good and beneficial system of management. But the hon. Gentleman could not expect, either as to Cornwall or Lancaster, that they could pay either to the public purse or to the private purse of the Sovereign, anything like a proportionate income to that which a private individual might expect to draw from these great estates. He would tell the hon. Gentleman why; because it consisted of a vast number of minute properties scattered over a great extent of country, and therefore requiring a much more expensive system of management than when the same amount of income was derived from one large unbroken estate; but at the same time he sincerely hoped that the duchy would be hereafter more economically managed than it had been. The hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent had made the only gallant charge that they had witnessed against the present system; but the hon. Gentleman had been so satisfactorily answered already, that if he acted wisely he would not return to the contest again, though he would have an opportunity of doing so next week. But the right hon. Baronet (Sir G. Grey), in his reply to the hon. Member, had overlooked one point — namely, that the property which was the subject of the action, had been leased to a private individual in whose name the action was carried on. [Mr. Ricardo: Yes; but the defence is at the expense of the duchy.] There were peculiar circumstances in the case, in consequence of which it was thought that the lessee had an equitable claim, and should not be left to fight an expensive battle with a great number of powerful opponents alone. The duchy felt the same obligation to assist the lessee as any private landlord, or as the hon. Member himself, would have felt and acted upon under similar circumstances, but no more. If the hon. Gentleman thought that the lessee of a mine should not be able to work it without being held liable for any damage that might be done to expensive buildings erected by other parties on the surface, then he should bring in a Bill to alter the law of the land; but while the law stood as it now was, let him not bring the state of that law as a charge against the duchy of Lancaster. He had to apologise for trespassing so long on the time of the House; but looking at all the circumstances—looking to the effect already produced of placing the management of these properties upon an altered footing—not attempting to go further than to deny, which he did totally, that the public or that House had any right either to sell the property or to take the management of it out of the hands of the present holders—he trusted that a sufficient case had been shown to induce the House to give a decided negative to the Motion.

Mr. HEYWORTH bore testimony to the improvement that had taken place in the management of the duchy of Lancaster, although at the same time he thought full room existed for further advancement in the same direction. Some years ago a late Chancellor appointed a gentleman as clerk of the peace for that duchy, who received 1,600*l.* a year in fees, but who had never been called upon to visit the duchy, all the labour being performed by a deputy, who did not receive half the salary that the nature of his office should entitle him to.

Mr. TRELAWNY replied. He thought that no grounds whatever had been made out for refusing this inquiry. If he possessed or was ever likely to possess the beautiful place alluded to by the noble Earl, his interest would be directly opposed to the object of his Motion: his object was not to seize upon the property, but to give the Duke of Cornwall 50,000*l.* a year, by establishing a better system of management, and at the same time to save the pockets of the public, by rendering a less amount necessary when they were called upon hereafter to vote an establishment for his use.

Question put. The House divided:—Ayes 27; Noes 74:—Majority 47.

List of the Ayes.

Adderley, C. B.
Aglionby, H. A.
Bass, M. T.
Blewitt, R. J.
Brotherton, J.
Carew, W. H. P.
Cobden, R.
Cowan, C.
Ellis, J.
Fox, W. J.
Gibson, rt. hon. T. M.
Gwyn, H.
Hardcastle, J. A.
Hastie, A.
Heyworth, L.
Kershaw, J.
Morris, D.
Pearson, C.
Perfect, R.
Pilkington, J.
Ricardo, J. L.
Smith, J. B.
Thicknesse, R. A.
Thompson, Col.
Thornely, T.
Walmsley, Sir J.
Wawn, J. T.

TELLERS.

Trelawny, J. T.
Hume, J.

List of the Noes.

Abdy, T. N.
Anderson, A.
Baines, M. T.
Baring, rt. hn. Sir F. T.
Baring, T.
Barrington, Visct.
Beckett, W.
Bellew, R. M.
Berkeley, hon. Capt.
Bernard, Visct.
Birch, Sir T. B.
Blackall, S. W.
Boyle, hon. Col.
Campbell, hon. W. F.
Castlereagh, Visct.
Chichester, Lord J. L.
Christy, S.
Cobbold, J. C.

Cochrane, A. D. R. W. B.
Coles, H. B.
Cowper, hon. W. F.
Duncan, Visct.
Duncuft, J.
Dundas, Adm.
Edwards, H.
Ferguson, Sir R. A.
Fordyce, A. D.
Grenfell, C. W.
Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.
Hallyburton, Lord J. F.
Hawes, B.
Henley, J. W.
Herbert, H. A.
Herbert, rt. hon. S.
Hobhouse, rt. hn. Sir J.
Hodgson, W. N.
Hollond, R.
Hood, Sir A.
Howard, Lord E.
Lewisham, Visct.
Lincoln, Earl of
Littleton, hon. E. R.
Magan, W. H.
Maitland, T.
Matheson, A.
Maule, rt. hon. F.
Maxwell, hon. J. P.
Miles, P. W. S.
Mulgrave, Earl of
Napier, J.
O'Brien, J.
Palmerston, Visct
Parker, J.
Pugh, D.
Robartes, T. J. A.
Russell, Lord J.
Rutherfurd, A.
Sandars, G.
Sheil, rt. hon. R. L.
Sheridan, R. B.
Simeon, J.
Smith, J. A.
Smith, M. T.
Smythe, hon. G.
Somerville, rt. hn. Sir W.
Spearman, H. J.
Stafford, A.
Tenison, E. K.
Turner, G. J.
Ward, H. G.
Willcox, B. M.
Wilson, M.
Wood, rt. hon. Sir C.
Wyld, J.

TELLERS.
Tufnell, H.
Hill, Lord M.

VANCOUVER'S ISLAND—THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.

MR. HUME moved—

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty that She will be graciously pleased to give directions that there be laid before this House a Copy of the Correspondence between the Hudson's Bay Company and the Secretary for the Colonies, in which the Case submitted to Her Majesty's Attorney and Solicitor General, and opinion thereon, respecting the capability of the Hudson's Bay Company to hold land as a grant from the Crown on the North West Coast of America, was specially forwarded and referred to in the letters of Mr. Hawes and Sir J. H. Pelly, printed in the Parliamentary Papers presented to this House in August last, respecting Vancouver's Island."

He thought it was proper they should have this information previous to the discussion on the subject. He was informed that the Company to whom Government had ceded this territory consisted of a few individuals only, who were without money or means sufficient to enable them to colonise the island, or transport emigrants thereto. Since the occupation of California by the United States, Vancouver's Island had become of even more importance than it had been before, inasmuch as it was the only place where we could establish a port for refitting shipping, in case of a war, on the whole line of that side of the American coast from Cape Hern to Behring's Straits; and it appeared to him that the Colonial Office and the Admiralty were neglecting their duty to the country in giving it away to the Hudson's Bay Company. Yet they were giving such a Company an island which was the more valuable now in consequence of what was taking place in California. He repeated it, that the events in California made Vancouver's Island more important to this country than before. Vancouver's Island ought to be made the seat of a large colony, instead of being handed over to a Company whose interests did not lead them to encourage emigration.

MR. HAWES assured his hon. Friend that it was not in the power of the Colonial Office—and he doubted whether it was in the power of Parliament—to obtain the return he required. The opinion alluded to in the correspondence now before Parliament was obtained by the Hudson's Bay Company on a case submitted by them to the Attorney and Solicitor Generals, in consequence of the Colonial Office having required from them an assurance, fortified by legal opinion, that they could receive the grant if made. They obtained that opinion, and on the authority of the Attorney and Solicitor Generals as therein laid down, the Colonial Office were satisfied, and conveyed the island to the Company, who were now in possession of it. But if it were not so—if the opinion were in the hands of the Colonial Office, it would, according to all precedent, be refused. It was not usual to lay before the House the opinions obtained from the law officers of the Crown confidentially for the guidance of the Government, nor did he think it advisable that such a practice should be established. He hoped, therefore, his hon. Friend would not press his Motion. Beyond the legal opinion alluded to, Government had no correspondence on the subject except that which was either already on the table, or included in the order which had been made at the instance of another hon. Friend, and which would be produced previous to the discussion. If the power of the Crown to make the grant was disputed, it was open to the parties disputing to obtain other legal authority on the subject.

MR. AGLIONBY said, that as regarded the power of Parliament to order papers, that was a matter of some importance, and he believed there were precedents of the opinions of the law officers of the Crown being called for and given. If he was not mistaken, on a very recent occasion the opinion of the Attorney General on the working of the Factory Act had been presented to Parliament. That, however, was not the present question; for here the opinions had not been taken by Ministers, but by another party, and having afterwards come into the custody of one department of the Government, the question was whether they should be called upon by Parliament to produce it. In an ordinary case, he should be disposed, he thought, to oppose such a proposition; but here a letter was produced by the Colonial Office from the Hudson's Bay Company, accompanying which was a case and opinion referred to in the letter, and which was forwarded to the Colonial Office to guide their judgment. As it appeared to him, therefore, these documents had been part of the Bill, and ought to be produced with it.

Mr. WYLD thought that in a case like the present, where a part of the British dominions had been ceded to a private Company, in respect to whom it was doubted whether they could legally accept the territory on such a tenure, that the legal opinions on which the Government had acted should be given.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

House adjourned at a quarter before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, February 23, 1849.

Minutes.] Public Bills.—2ª Habeas Corpus Suspension (Ireland).

Reported.—Inland Revenue.

Petitions Presented. From Derby, for the Adoption of such Measures as shall secure to Clergymen Seceding from the Church, the full Benefits of the Acts of Toleration.

CONVICT ESTABLISHMENTS.

The **Duke of RICHMOND** wished to put the question of which he had given notice on this subject to the noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies—namely, whether the Government would consent to abstain from the entire abandonment of the system established with respect to the female convicts sent on board the *Anson*, and from giving orders for dispersing the staff employed on board that convict ship, until, by the production of the papers connected with the subject, their Lordships were enabled to see whether they could approve or not of that abandonment. It was the bounden duty of the Legislature to see whether some plan might not be adopted for the purpose of providing for the numerous class of female prisoners, now assembled on board the hulks, some means of reformation. If there were a large number of female convicts sent from the manufacturing districts to act as domestic servants in the colonies, to take care of children, and so on, without any previous steps having been taken to reform them, it would be of course most destructive to the morality and well-being of the people there. He hoped the Government would not entirely break up the female convict establishment; but, at all events, that system should not be abandoned unless the Government were prepared to submit to the House some other plan which would have the effect of reforming those unfortunate females. He made no charge against the Government—he only wished to call his noble Friend's attention to the subject, being perfectly satisfied of his being most anxious to endeavour to reform those unfortunate young persons, many of whom had not reached the age of twenty years.

Earl GREY said, that in consequence of the notice which he had received from the noble Duke to ask the question which had been just put, he had referred to the correspondence on this subject in the Colonial Office, and he did not find in it anything to induce him to alter the arrangement that had already been come to. The papers on the subject had been laid upon the table of the House a few days ago, and would be at once in the hands of their Lordships. The establishment on board the *Anson* was entirely the act of the Executive Government of the day, for which the Government were alone responsible; and it required no interference on the part of Parliament to authorise any alteration with regard to it. The subject had been very fully and carefully considered; and, with the most perfect conviction as to the necessity of doing away with that establishment, he did not think that he would have been justified in postponing the despatch of his instructions to the colony until the question would have been considered by Parliament. He held in his hand an extract from the despatch of Sir William Denison, of the 5th of December, 1847, in which he stated—

> "In my last despatch I stated my opinion of the unsatisfactory nature of the establishment for female convicts on board the *Anson*. Since then, Dr. Bowden has died, and Mrs. Bowden has been continued, though at a reduced salary, as superintendent. I cannot, however, refrain from impressing upon your Lordship the advisability, in every point of view, of breaking up the establishment altogether. The returns which accompany the report of the Comptroller General show that the discipline, if such it can be called, is altogether inoperative in producing improved moral habits, and the material results are equally nugatory. The saving of expense by allowing the fe-

male convicts to be hired at once on their arrival, will be very great; and I feel certain that the change will be beneficial in every way."

The view expressed by Sir William Denison was corroborated by Mr. Hampton, the Comptroller General of Convicts; but still, even after the receipt of that despatch, he had thought it better to wait for another half-yearly report, before taking any decisive steps on the subject. At the end of the next half-year, however, Sir William Denison and the Comptroller General of Convicts reiterated their former opinions, and convinced him of the expediency of no longer postponing the despatch of female convicts, more especially as a female house of correction had been opened at Ross, in the centre of the island, in a situation affording great facilities for the reception of offenders. He was persuaded that under the circumstances the hulk should be abandoned. He attributed the failure of the experiment not to any want of care or attention on the part of Mrs. Bowden, the superintendent, but as the necessary and inevitable result of any attempt to establish a system of female discipline on board a crowded hulk. Neither in the Bermudas, nor in Van Diemen's Land, nor at home, had such a system succeeded. The more he saw of this system, the more did he become convinced of the necessity of forming an establishment on shore for the reception of those convicts, where there would be sufficient space for separation of the classes, and for ventilation. He was of opinion that any attempt at improvement in the state of the convicts must be by subjecting them to a preliminary period of severe discipline in this country. The subject had undergone the most careful consideration both on his own part and on that of his right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and they were both of opinion that the treatment of female convicts was a subject involving peculiar difficulties.

LORD STANLEY said, in the absence of the papers to which the noble Lord had alluded, he would not refer to the subject farther than to ask the noble Earl three questions; and he wished at the same time, to remind him that the establishment on board the *Anson* was merely a temporary establishment, which it was proposed to continue merely until a penitentiary, on an extensive scale, could have been erected on shore. He wished to know, in the first place, if the report of Sir William Denison, or of the Comptroller General of Convicts, was made from personal examination? And if so, whether such personal inspections had been frequent or otherwise? Also, whether, as Mrs. Bowden, the superintendent of the *Anson*, was at present in this country, the noble Lord had communicated with her so as to afford her an opportunity to explain the charges that had been brought against her management?

EARL GREY said, that the papers were now in the library of their Lordships' House, and the noble Lord would have them at his own residence to-morrow, when he could refer to them in detail. He was unable to state from memory how frequently Sir William Denison, or the Comptroller General of Convicts, had personally inspected the establishment. As to the other question put by the noble Lord, he certainly had not asked for any explanation from Mrs. Bowden, because no fault had been attributed to her management. On the contrary, he had already stated that the failure of the establishment was not owing to the management pursued, but that it was a necessary effect of a system of crowding a large number of female convicts on board a hulk.

SUSPENSION OF THE HABEAS CORPUS ACT (IRELAND) BILL.

The MARQUESS of LANSDOWNE said, that he rose to move the Second Reading of the Bill now on their Lordships' table, for continuing for a limited period the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland. In moving this Bill, he certainly felt himself under some degree of embarrassment, not from any apprehension that their Lordships would not see sufficient grounds to entertain the measure, but because, while he felt, on the one hand, that it would be most improper and unbecoming, whenever a measure infringing in any degree on the liberty of the subject, as this Bill undoubtedly did, was brought forward, for the Minister having charge of it to withhold all explanation with regard to the grounds upon which it was proposed, or for their Lordships to abstain from all consideration of the necessity for its enactment; yet, on the other hand, he felt that the grounds of this measure had been already so fully and so explicitly laid before them in the despatch from the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, now on their Lordships' table, that he could have nothing to add to the statement contained in that despatch, which was in their Lordships' hands, and that any comments which he might be induced to make upon the Lord Lieutenant's statement would leave him exposed to the charge of rather taking from that statement than of adding to its force. However, even with that feeling, he still thought it to be his duty to recall to their Lordships' attention the fact, that, although the efforts of Her Majesty's Government, and the efforts of the loyal and well-disposed portion of Her Majesty's Irish subjects, had hitherto been successful in putting down that which none of their Lordships who had read the proofs and testimonies that they possessed on this subject could doubt had been a deliberate, systematic, and intended attempt at rebellion in that country, which only failed by the promptitude and energy with which it was met—feeling that their Lordships must be well convinced of that, he thought it was hardly necessary for him to suggest to them what the Lord Lieutenant had already so well laid before them — that it was impossible, after such a trial and such an agitation, that the wave of that agitation should be considered as having completely subsided; and that their Lordships were, therefore, not to be called upon, in some degree, to provide for the future as they had provided for the past. It resulted, however, from the nature of the case, that the very success of the experiment—if experiment it were — had deprived them of proofs of the necessity for its continuance; but, on the contrary, there were abundant proofs, up to the very latest moment, so far as there had been any expression of feeling on the part of the leaders in that rebellion, or of their followers, that they had seen reason, undoubtedly, to regret their failure, but not to regret their attempt. It was most desirable that every effort should be made to put an end to the state of agitation as well as to the depreciation which, from other circumstances, had, in the course of a recent period, prevailed in that part of the united kingdom, over the interests of which, and over the well-disposed and loyal portion of the inhabitants of which, it was their Lordships' bounden duty to watch. But, without dwelling on what their Lordships were aware was the opinion of the Lord Lieutenant on this question, he would wish to call their Lordships' attention to the manifestations of opinion on the part of those persons themselves, before, during, and after the recent trials in Ireland, and which manifestations proved the necessity which existed for the continuance of the present proposed safeguard of the peace of the country. They had, on this point, the evidence of some of those persons themselves. They had the evidence of one of the leaders in that rebellion, who had been induced to fly the country, and to cross the Atlantic, to avoid the danger which he apprehended from the well-known share that he had taken in the rebellion. That gentleman had gone to New York; and their Lordships had the advantage of learning from his testimony, not only what had been, but what still were, the sentiments and intentions of the leaders of sedition, rebellion, and treason, in that country. He trusted that their Lordships would bear with him for a few moments while he called their attention to some of the sentiments expressed by that individual, and to some matters disclosed by him at a public meeting held in New York. The meeting was numerously attended, and was held, as it appeared, for the purpose of presenting a rifle to a Lieutenant M'Cann, who was about to take his departure for California. At that meeting he found that Mr. Doheny used this language—

> "And I came not here to despair, nor to live upon the good opinion of the past, but to repair, if I can, and wherever I can, the fortunes of my country. The first thing I desire to say is, that there is no cause for despair—that nothing was done on the late occasion of which any Irishman need be ashamed. There was no betrayal on the part of the Irish; there was not one among the starving and the miserable found base enough to accept a bribe. Circumstances unexpected occurred—we were separated in the country—we were forced on by the cunning of the Government—the movement was prematurely urged to a crisis which proved for the present ruinous to the cause of Ireland. That crisis became inevitable. A Bill was passed through the British Parliament by Government in one night. The same mail that brought the intelligence of its introduction, brought the Bill itself with the royal signature attached. . . . . Need it be wondered at that defeat attended our endeavours? There was no time for concert, not even an opportunity to meet and consult until the auspicious moment had passed away. . . . . We travelled through a district of country where in one day 20,000 pikes were forged, fitted, and polished. With these means at our disposal, had we a lucky chance to obtain a single victory, old Ireland would have been a free nation, her Norman taskmasters would have ceased to pollute her sacred shore. . . . . . We are still turbulent—still disaffected. Either Ireland shall be free—a free republic, 'one indivisible and supreme' or the end of our turbulence is not in time. . . . . If England's dissolution come not in ten or twelve years, it is inevitable, no matter how long delayed; and as sure as the returning spring assures us that nature asserts her sovereignty in the change of seasons, so sure will Irishmen establish in Ireland a republic, one and indivisible. . . As for me, I confess I was never what is

> called a repealer. On the contrary, my belief was that the soil of Ireland belonged to her people, and that the 'golden link of the Crown' would be but another name for slavery; that in Ireland we should have a starred flag of our own, which, in the hour of peril to human liberty, would float beside that of the great republic."

This had at least the merit of being frank and open, and was the language of one who had been in the counsels of that party that had agitated Ireland last summer, and who was ready, it appeared, to take the same part whenever the opportunity again offered. With that announcement, and with the declaration of the Lord Lieutenant before them, their Lordships could have no hesitation in declaring that for the security of that country, and for the prevention of disturbance, these leaders, on whom alone this Act would be and could be brought to bear, ought to be deprived of the power of again disturbing the peace of the country. He would say no more, but to add that he wished to guard himself against the supposition that this measure, or any measures of the like nature, were alone sufficient to provide for the future welfare of Ireland. Although he thought that measures such as this were indispensable as the foundation for future prosperity—as the only means by which alone any improvement in the state of property could take place—yet he was at the same time willing to admit that it was the bounden duty of the Legislature not to consider such enactments as the only panacea for the evils of Ireland, but from time to time to engage in the consideration of its social position, with a view to ascertain of what remedies it would admit, what improvements they could promote by laws, and, above all, what security they could give to the sober, the industrious, and the loyal inhabitants, occupiers and proprietors of that country. On these grounds he begged to move that the Bill be now read a second time.

LORD BROUGHAM said, the chief objection which he saw to the Bill was the limited period for which it was demanded, as he could perceive no grounds on which the Lord Lieutenant could hope that by the 1st of September or the 1st of August, or any such appointed near time, there would be an end to Irish rebellion, though there might be an end to some of their Lordships' lives within that time. That was a matter, however, which his noble Friend had to take on his own responsibility. He wished merely to say one word on the nature of the mischief which they all so much deplored—first of all, because it plunged Ireland into her present abject state, aggravating all the social evils under which she suffered, and preventing, as it undeniably did, capital from going thither, the want of which was admittedly the great evil of which that country had to complain; and, secondly, because it rendered imperative the temporary suspension of the constitution—in itself a very great evil at all times. But the cause of all these evils was the agitation which had been allowed to prevail so long in that country. He did not blame the Government to which his noble Friend opposite belonged, or the Government of which he had been himself a Member, or the late Government of Sir Robert Peel, or the Government of his noble and gallant Friend at the table (the Duke of Wellington). He did not blame any one of those Governments in particular, but he thought they were all chargeable with great neglect in this particular. He said this in the presence of his noble and gallant Friend opposite (the Marquess of Anglesea), who had been one of the most able of Irish Viceroys, as he was one of those who was least to blame in this respect, having closely followed the steps of his illustrious predecessor, his (Lord Brougham's) lamented friend, Lord Wellesley. The system with all Governments had been to let agitation go on until it came to so fearful a height that it was scarcely possible to put a stop to it. They had allowed successions of meetings to be held, finances to be extorted from the pockets of the starving people, and agitators, lay and clerical, to work upon the minds of the multitude to such an excess, that at length it became necessary to take such steps as the present to prevent the efforts of the agitators from going further, and overturning the Government. Agitation was the cause, and rebellion was the result. They allowed agitation to be sown, and rebellion was the fruit which they should be prepared to gather. Agitation had become a trade. It was as much a trade as any other trade in the sister country, and was much more actively followed than any other. The natives of Ireland had shown themselves most industrious in this trade, though they might, perhaps, not excel in the ordinary branches of industry as much as the natives of some other parts of the united kingdom. The consequence was most melancholy; but it was only what, according to the most obvious principles of economic science, they had to expect—namely, that other trades had been abandoned for the more lucrative, and exciting, and popular trade of agitation. Yet he found that in a part of the country where great distress prevailed, 1,000*l.* had been collected for the purpose, not of relieving the poor and necessitous, or of enabling persons to exist who are dying of hunger, but to send to his Holiness the Pope, who began the agitation in Italy, and had reaped the fruit he sowed himself. Things must be much out of joint in a country where such transactions occurred. He could not look on the 1st of September as a proper limit to fix for the duration of this Bill: when he looked at the letter of his excellent Friend, Lord Clarendon, who had so admirably administered the government of Ireland during the last two eventful years, a longer suspension seemed rather to be recommended than repudiated. Consider for a moment the state in which the administration of justice in Ireland was placed. Gracious God! Only think of a juror getting up in the jury-box, clapping his hands, and crying "hurrah!" at an observation of the counsel for the prisoner! Such a country is wholly unfit for jury trial if scenes like these are suffered. Why, you might as well have an African jury; greater indecency could never be witnessed in the worst *kraal* of Hottentots to be met with in Africa. When he perceived that a juror had clapped his hands and hurraed—when he read that he said there would be no verdict, and there was accordingly no verdict—the oath told the juror that he should well and truly try the case submitted to him—but the man who took the oath and so conducted himself, showed that he was but little prepared to keep it. Belonging to their Lordships—as a Member of that Supreme Court—he could not express to them the indignation which he felt in finding that such scenes could take place, and which tended to prove that the country in which it occurred was unworthy of that which was felt to be a prime blessing—trial by jury. The indignation, too, that he felt against this conduct, was also caused by the consideration that it was setting such a bad example to witnesses; for if a witness saw a juror in respectable circumstances, as he understood that person to be—the owner, as he understood, of one of the principal inns in Dublin— [A Noble Lord: The Shelburne.] Why, he had said that this person had, by his name, brought disgrace upon one great name, but he should be sorry to think that by his calling he was able to bring disgrace upon another. Here, then, was a respectable man in point of station; and when poor persons were brought forward as witnesses, and saw that person thus trifling with his oath, as by his conduct he showed he did, and encouraging them to disregard theirs, he said they could not expect those poor persons to behave better as witnesses than their betters did as jurors. As to the other measures which the noble Marquess had said he hoped would accompany or follow this Bill, all he would say as to such measures was, that it was easier to express a hope than to entertain an expectation.

Lord MONTEAGLE quite agreed with his noble and learned Friend, that it would have been desirable to extend the limits of the term for which this Bill was to last. A longer duration would have accorded better with the course recommended by Lord Clarendon, whilst the short time of six months taken in the present Bill might lead to serious Parliamentary inconvenience. The Bill might come on for renewal at the latest period of the Session, when it might stand in the way of other more urgent legislation. In reference to the observations of his noble and learned Friend on the juries in Dublin, he would venture to put in a claim for other parts of Ireland, where the people had shown they were possessed of manliness, of courage, and of impartiality in the performance of their duty—other parts of Ireland, where no impediments were thrown in the way of justice. While upon such a painful subject, he must call their Lordships' attention to one grievous defect in the law relating to Ireland—that was, in the law relating to the possession of arms in that country. To the state of the law upon that subject was to be attributed much of the crime and much of the agitation which disgraced Ireland; and it was also dangerous to the existence of the connexion between the two countries. For the first time for many years they had no law on the Statute-book for putting a restraint on the possession of arms. Such a state of the law ought not to be allowed, because it was dangerous to the loyal man, and gave great advantage to the disaffected to carry out their designs. One argument used against the enactment of an Arms Bill was, that it gave the power of domiciliary visits. Was that system at an end now? No. Domiciliary visits were now frequent, but they were made, not by the officers of the law, but by the Ribbonmen—by the sworn disturbers of the public peace. Many men who were in the rightful possession of arms had been despoiled of them by the robber, who turned them against the law. During the last four years the number of offences in the robbery of arms had increased from 159 to 1606. That was the number of offences, having no reference to the number of arms taken, or of persons engaged in the depredation; and out of so many offences there had been no more than seventy-nine prosecutions and only twenty-six convictions. This was not a state of the law which their Lordships could allow to continue, if they hoped for a restoration of public tranquillity in Ireland. No other remedy would be so effectual to put down the rebellious spirit as a good Arms Bill.

On Question, resolved in the affirmative: Bill read 2ª: Committee negatived; Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next.

HIGHWAY RATES AND TURNPIKE TRUSTS.

The Marquess of **SALISBURY** moved for certain returns connected with Highway Rates and Turnpike Trusts.

The Duke of **RICHMOND** could not allow that, the very first opportunity, to pass over without entering his protest against the attempt which was about to be made to saddle the county rates with the whole 8,000,000*l.* of debt which the turnpike trusts had incurred. This was the very worst period which could be conceived for such a plan—a time when the agriculturists were suffering under so much distress. A time when the agricultural interest was called upon to compete with the foreigner was the very last moment they could have expected that any Minister would come to Parliament with a proposal to add eight millions to the county rates. They might attempt to make that addition, but the time was fast coming when they must either go back to the wise and honest system of protection to British interests, which they must do, or they would be called upon by the voice of the whole country to review their system of taxation—to get rid of the present system which pressed so heavily and injuriously upon the industry of the country. As to the malt tax, he would not give them a year's purchase for it. The farmers could not pay their rates and taxes, if they were compelled to enter into competition with the foreigner, and yet this was the time when it was proposed to add eight millions to their already heavy burdens. Their Lordships knew that the county rate was paid out of the poor's rate, to which the smallest cottager was called upon to contribute, and he used turnpike roads but little. Why, then, should he be saddled with such an additional load of taxation? He could not allow that—the very first opportunity—to pass without protesting against additional taxation being thrown on the industry of the country.

House adjourned to Monday next.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, February 23, 1849.

Minutes.] Public Bills.—1° Offences (Ireland); Summary Convictions (Ireland); Protection of Justices (Ireland); Parliamentary Oaths.

2° Relief of Distress (Ireland); Vice Guardians of Unions (Ireland).

3° Consolidated Fund (8,000,000*l.*); Commons Inclosure.

Petitions Presented. By Mr. William Brown, from David Boswell Reid, M.D., for Inquiry respecting the New Houses of Parliament.—By Mr. Sidney Herbert, from the Vicars of the Cathedral Church of Sarum, respecting Lay Clerks at Cathedral Churches.—By Mr. Bright, from the Inhabitants of Rawden, Yeadon, Guisely, and its Vicinity, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, for an Alteration of the Law respecting the Church of England Clergy.—By Mr. Broadley, from several Clergymen of the East Riding of Yorkshire, against any Alteration of the Marriage Law.—By Lord Claud Hamilton, from Members of the Loyal Tyrone Lodge of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, in favour of an Extension of the Benefit Societies Act.—By Colonel Lindsay, from Out-Pensioners of Chelsea Hospital, respecting Deductions from their Half Pay.—By Sir J. Young, from the Parish of Shircock, County of Cavan, for an Alteration of the Poor Law (Ireland).—By Lord Dudley Stuart, from Members of the Marylebone Literary and Scientific Institution, for Inquiry respecting Public Libraries.—By Mr. Alexander Hastie, from the Glasgow Emancipation Society, for the Suppression of the Slave Trade.—By Mr. Philip Bennet, from Merchants, and Others, of the Borough of Sudbury, for an Alteration of the Small Debts Act.—By Mr. Parker, from the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of Sheffield, for Referring War Disputes to Arbitration.

PRIVILEGE OF MEMBERS.

Mr. **BERNAL OSBORNE** wished to put a question as to the privileges of the House. He did not know what the custom might be as to Committees of the House; but he had always understood that these Committees were open to the attendance of Members of Parliament except during the time of division. There was a Committee (the Irish Poor Law Committee) in which many Members took a strong interest; and he understood that that Committee had come to a resolution to prevent the attendance of all Members of Parliament. This not being a Secret Committee, he asked whether such a course of proceeding was in conformity with the rules of Parliament?

Mr. SPEAKER: According to the rules of the House, every hon. Member is privileged to attend in a Committee, unless the Committee is secret. The usual practice has been that, during the deliberations of the Committee, other hon. Members have left the room. There have been instances where hon. Members would not leave the room, and where, on the application of the Committee, the House granted a power to exclude hon. Members.

Mr. BERNAL OSBORNE: Am I to understand that they cannot turn me out of the room?

Mr. SPEAKER: The Committee have no power to exclude the hon. Member, unless they have a definite power from the House.

Mr. BRIGHT said, as no other Member of the Committee rose to explain the matter, perhaps he might say a few words. The hon. Member (Mr. B. Osborne) had not stated the facts quite accurately. So far, no evidence had been taken by the Committee. When the evidence came to be taken, it was agreed that any hon. Member might be present; but during the discussion of certain resolutions, and dividing upon them, it was considered that hon. Members had no right to be in the room. For himself, he could have wished that the rule had not been drawn so tightly, but he thought it right to state these facts, as the hon. Member had not stated them with perfect accuracy.

Mr. BERNAL OSBORNE: I give the hon. Gentleman notice that to-morrow I shall attend the discussions of the Committee.

Sir JOHN YOUNG said, it was the invariable practice of hon. Gentlemen who were not Members of a Committee to absent themselves from the Committee-room while a deliberation or a division was taking place.

Mr. SPEAKER said, the hon. Member was quite correct in his statement of the practice; but if hon. Members persisted in attending a Committee, there was no power to exclude them, unless by application to the House.

Sir J. PAKINGTON: The course taken this morning on the Irish Poor Law Committee is the only course which I have seen taken in every Select Committee of which I have been a Member.

POOR REMOVAL ACT.

Captain PECHELL begged to ask the Commissioner of Poor Laws—"Whether in consequence of the recent decision in the Court of Queen's Bench having upset the opinion given by the law officers of the Crown upon the construction of the Poor Removal Act, it is intended to cancel the instructions, founded on that opinion, issued to the board of guardians on the 20th day of October, 1846; and whether provision will be made for the repayment to unions and parishes of the expenses incurred by them respectively, in the maintenance of poor belonging to other parishes, whose relief was withdrawn in consequence of those instructions?" The parish of Brighton had been put to an expense of more than 1,000*l.* for maintaining paupers imposed upon them improperly.

Mr. BAINES, in reply to the question which had been put to him, said that the facts which bore upon the question now before the House were these. Very soon after the passing of the Poor Removal Act, the 9th and 10th Victoria, c. 66, the Poor Law Commissioners received applications from the guardians of a great many unions for advice as to the construction of one particular provision of that Act. At that time no judicial decision had been pronounced on the subject. The Poor Law Commissioners did their best to furnish the most trustworthy advice to the guardians who so applied. They laid a case before gentlemen of the highest eminence—law officers of the Crown—and took their opinion on the subject. Having obtained that opinion, they forwarded it to the different boards of guardians. Very recently, indeed, the Court of Queen's Bench had decided that the true construction of the provision of the Act was different from that which was put on it by the law officers of the Crown. What had been done to make the decision of the Queen's Bench known was this: the decision having been pronounced must be taken to constitute the law of the land, and the Poor Law Board had lost no time in making the parishes and unions acquainted with the fact. The attention of all had been called to the subject in the annual report of the Poor Law Commissioners, and there was on the point of being issued the official circular, which was addressed to all boards of guardians throughout the country, stating the decision of the Queen's Bench, and calling attention to the fact. They had also directed that they should be furnished with an abstract of the decision which the Queen's Bench had pronounced on this Act of Parliament. They had lost no time in communicating to the different parishes. With regard to the latter part of the hon. Gentleman's question, he was not aware of any authority by which the repayment of expenses could be made.

CAPTAIN PECHELL asked, whether it was intended to take into consideration the repayment of those expenses which had become serious in many cases?

MR. BAINES: Since the hon. Member had furnished notice of his Motion, the attention of the Poor Law Board had been directed to the subject, and they had come to the conclusion that they had no power in point of law to make any provision for repayment.

WAR IN THE PUNJAUB.

MR. G. THOMPSON begged to ask the President of the Board of Control—"Whether, as Her Majesty's Ministers have deemed it their duty to lay before the House a blue book of 378 pages, relating to a rebellion in the island of Ceylon in July last, they do not consider it equally their duty to lay before the House the papers relating to the war in the Punjaub, described by Her Majesty in Her gracious Speech from the Throne as 'a rebellion,' which war has been going on since April, 1848, and has necessitated the calling of an army into the field of not less than 120,000 men, including camp followers, and involving an extraordinary expenditure of not less than five millions sterling a year."

SIR J. C. HOBHOUSE said, that the question which the hon. Gentleman had put to him, and which he intended to put to his noble Friend the First Lord of the Treasury, was one of those questions, he submitted to the House, which were couched in terms that entitled them to be called argumentative questions. He assumed certain things which were not the fact, and he grounded the questions upon them. If he had put the question in the common form, when would the papers be produced? —he (Sir J. C. Hobhouse) would not have had the least objection to give an answer. The hon. Gentleman asked why it was, when the Queen's Government presented a folio of 378 pages relating to a rebellion in the island of Ceylon, they did not present one equally large as to the affairs of the Punjaub. The answer was very simple. The affairs of Ceylon were over, and Government had thought it their duty to present those papers, that Parliament might form some opinion as to those matters. Then he went on to say that a war had been raging since April, 1848. It had not been going on since April, 1848. The commencement dated much later than the period which the hon. Gentleman mentioned. He then went on to state that there was an army now in the field of 120,000 men, including camp followers. He (Sir J. C. Hobhouse) knew nothing about camp followers; it might mean camels, and matters of that sort. He could assure the hon. Member that the force in the field did not amount to half that number. And then he was so good as to estimate the cost. How did he know that it cost five millions? It had never been the practice to ask the question in this form. If the hon. Member had simply asked the question when the papers would be produced, he (Sir J. C. Hobhouse) would have told him. Under all these circumstances, he would therefore be justified in giving no answer at all; but he had no objection to say that, following the precedent of the war in the Sutlej, the House would receive all the papers so soon as the wars were over, when he would be ready to furnish all the information that any hon. Member might require.

MR. G. THOMPSON gave notice, that he should on Monday next move, in reference to that part of the Queen's Speech informing Parliament that a war had broken out in the Punjaub, that an Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to direct the Papers to be laid before the House without further delay, and then justify the statement he had made.

Subject dropped.

THE RAJAH OF SATTARA.

MR. HUME asked whether any arrangements had been made for the family of the Rajah of Sattara? Sixteen months had now passed, and he was informed that not 1*s.* of money had been given. The family had been left in a state of beggary, contrary to the assurance given by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth.

SIR J. C. HOBHOUSE said, the reason why money had not been given to them was, that the widow of the Rajah refused to receive it until his adopted son should be recognised as his heir. It was offered by the Governor General, and it was refused on that ground.

DISTRESS (IRELAND)—INACCURATE RETURNS.

MR. STAFFORD said, in the absence

of his right hon. Friend the Secretary for Ireland, he would ask a question, of which he had given the right hon. Gentleman verbal notice. It was in reference to the gross inaccuracies which characterised the returns in reference to Irish distress that were distributed to Members that morning. In one page there was a blunder of *5l.*, in another of *20l.*, in another of *10l.*; in one the blunder was as high as *2,500l.*, and in another page there was a sum in addition, from which appeared that *6d.* and 0 made *4d.* It was intolerable that to all the other difficulties connected with Irish distress there should be added this one of inaccuracy in the Government returns. He wished to ask whether the Government would lay before the House amended returns? And next, whether they would take good care that these inaccuracies should not happen again?

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER asked for the papers, which Mr. Stafford handed to him. The right hon. Gentleman said, that in the book there were certain letters and statements; some were signed by the vice-guardians of the union, and some by the poor-law inspectors. But there was no document in it to which the name of the person who made it was not appended. So that if there were any errors they were not made by any officer of the Government, but by the persons who had made the communications to the officers of the Government. The hon. Gentleman said the papers furnished by the Government were inaccurate and false, and upon that assumption he wanted to know if the Government would present amended copies. He (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) was not prepared to admit such an assumption. He was not prepared to admit that the papers were either inaccurate or false; but if there were any errors in them, which were not errors of the printer, they were mistakes of the persons furnishing the returns, and not mistakes of the Government. But it would be for the hon. Gentleman to prove first his assertion there were inaccuracies in the papers, and he should give notice of his intention to do so.

MR. STAFFORD should have no difficulty in proving his assertion. And he trusted that he should find no difficulty in convincing the Chancellor of the Exchequer that sixpence and nothing do not make fourpence.

Subject at an end.

PARLIAMENTARY OATHS BILL.

The House then resolved itself into Committee; Mr. BERNAL in the chair.

Motion made, and question proposed—

> "That it is expedient to alter the Oaths required to be taken by the subjects of Her Majesty not professing the Roman Catholic Religion, as qualifications for sitting and voting in Parliament, and to make provision in respect of the said Oaths for the relief of Her Majesty's subjects professing the Jewish Religion."

MR. VERNON SMITH rose to move the Amendment of which he had given notice. He would not, in so doing, detain the House longer than merely whilst he stated his general opinion that there ought to be no difference made between Gentlemen who came to the table to be sworn, on account of difference of religious persuasion. He had no scruple whatsoever in voting for the admission of Jews to Parliament. Whether the question was one which attracted public attention or not, did not signify in the least degree. But he thought that when they were not confining themselves merely to the admission of Jews to Parliament, but were taking the opportunity of that question to alter and amend the oaths to be taken by Members generally, they should endeavour to make the improvement as complete as possible. He asked the House, therefore, whether it would not be better that they should set aside altogether oaths that were unnecessary? He had a strong objection to the multiplication of oaths; and he thought that by simplifying those taken by Members of Parliament, they would be doing good service to the public at large. He did not wish to cast any slur upon that House; but he should say when hon. Gentlemen talked about the solemnity of the act of hon. Members coming to take the oaths at that table amidst the buzz and conversation of the House, that he did not think any observer could consider it either a solemn or a decorous proceeding. The proposal of his noble Friend (Lord J. Russell) certainly simplified the oaths to a certain extent, but it still left what he considered a most unnecessary portion, and made a most unnecessary distinction; for it still provided different oaths for persons of different religious persuasions coming into that House. His noble Friend retained the Roman Catholic oath, because he said it had been established in 1829, and had remained unchanged for twenty years. That, he (Mr. Vernon Smith) thought, was no reason why it should be allowed to remain any longer. Not having conversed with any Members of the Roman Catholic persuasion upon the subject, he was unaware of their sentiments regarding it; but he himself thought the oath very objectionable, of very doubtful interpretation, and an insult to the Gentlemen of the Roman Catholic persuasion. And did any man, he would ask, consider that it gave any security to the Protestant Church? If, then, it were in every way objectionable, and productive in itself of no security, surely that oath ought to be done away with. Next, with regard to the Protestant oaths. The oath of supremacy, as described by the noble Lord, was only an explanation of the oath of allegiance. And the oath of adjuration his noble Friend proposed to deal with very summarily, it being absurd for any one to be called upon to abjure the pretensions of a Pretender who had no existence. It was to the oath of allegiance, then, that he wished the direct attention of the House, because it was intelligible to every one; and then he should remark upon the curious discrepancy between the oaths taken by Protestants and Roman Catholics. Protestants were called upon to swear by the true faith of a Christian, whilst Roman Catholics were obliged to swear that they would do no injury to the Church as established by law. The Protestant was not called upon to swear that he would do no hurt to the Church as established, nor was the Roman Catholic asked to swear upon the true faith of a Christian. Yet the Protestant Dissenter was, in his (Mr. Vernon Smith's) opinion, just as likely to do injury to the Established Church as the Roman Catholic. He should express his disagreement with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Oxford University (Mr. Gladstone) in the stress which he had laid upon the retention in the oath of the words, "upon the true faith of a Christian;" for, when members of the different sects of Christianity met at the same table in that House, and swore upon the true faith of a Christian, he was at a loss to know what was meant by the term "faith"—some of those Christian sects differing as widely in matters of faith from one another as Christians generally did from Jews. His noble Friend proposed still to retain three different forms of oath—one to be taken by Protestants of all denominations; one by Roman Catholics; and another by Jews. He thought that no man ought to be called upon at that table to declare what his religious opinions were. The more the oaths were simplified, the more decorous and solemn would their proceedings be.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'expedient' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'to abolish all Oaths except the Oaths of Fidelity and Allegiance,' instead thereof."

Lord J. RUSSELL said, he had only to repeat the explanation which he had given upon a previous occasion, namely, that he did not think it expedient to alter the Roman Catholic oath, which was settled in 1829, when the great question of Roman Catholic disabilities was disposed of. Many hon. Gentlemen thought that that oath did give security to the Protestant Church, and he therefore did not think there was sufficient cause to induce him to propose an alteration of it. He did not see the expediency of raising a great question when there was no necessity for doing so.

Mr. HUME agreed with his right hon. Friend (Mr. Vernon Smith) in the necessity that existed for reducing as much as possible unnecessary oaths. The Duke of Richmond, it was calculated, by the measure he introduced respecting oaths taken at the Customs and other places, had abolished by his Bill twenty millions of oaths. That is, that number of unnecessary oaths had been avoided. Since then, he believed they had abolished as many more, and he was not aware that the slightest dishonesty had ever occurred in consequence. He should vote for his right hon. Friend's Amendment.

Question put—"That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question." The Committee divided:—Ayes 140; Noes 68: Majority 72.

List of the Ayes.

Abdy, T. N.
Adderley, C. B.
Anson, hon. Col.
Archdall, Capt. M.
Ashley, Lord
Bailey, J.
Bailey, J. jun.
Baillie, H. J.
Baines, M. T.
Baldock, E. H.
Bankes, G.
Barrington, Visct.
Bennet, P.
Berkeley, hon. Capt.
Berkeley, C. L. G.
Bernard, Visct.
Blair, S.
Bourke, R. S.
Broadley, H.
Brotherton, J.
Brown, H.
Bruce, C. L. C.
Campbell, hon. W. F.
Carew, W. H. P.
Carter, J. B.
Chichester, Lord J. L.
Christy, S.
Clerk, rt. hon. Sir G.
Clive, hon. R. H.
Cocks, T. S.
Cole, hon. H. A.
Cubitt, W.
Davies, D. A. S.
Disraeli, B.
Dod, J. W.
Drumlanrig, Visct.
Duckworth, Sir J. T. B.
Duncuft, J.
Dundas, G.
Farrer, J.
Ffolliott, J.
Floyer, J.

Foley, J. H. H.
Forbes, W.
Fuller, A. E.
Gladstone, rt. hn. W. E.
Goulburn, rt. hon. H.
Granby, Marq. of
Graham, rt. hon. Sir J.
Greenall, G.
Grenfell, C. P.
Grenfell, C. W.
Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.
Gwyn, H.
Halford, Sir H.
Harris, hon. Capt.
Harris, R.
Hawes, B.
Hayter, rt. hon. W. G.
Heald, J.
Heathcoat, J.
Heneage, G. H. W.
Henley, J. W.
Herries, rt. hon. J. C.
Hervey, Lord A.
Hodges, T. L.
Hodgson, W. N.
Hogg, Sir J. W.
Hope, Sir J.
Hope, A.
Hornby, J.
Hotham, Lord
Jermyn, Earl
Johnstone, Sir J.
Keppel, hon. G. T.
Labouchere, rt. hon. H.
Lascelles, hon. W. S.
Lemon, Sir C.
Lewis, rt. hon. Sir T. F.
Lewis, G. C.
Lindsay, hon. Col.
Macnaghten, Sir E.
Macnamara, Maj.
M'Gregor, J.
Mahon, Visct.
Maitland, T.
Mandeville, Visct.
Mangles, R. D.
Masterman, J.
Matheson, Col.
Maunsell, T. P.
Morgan, H. K. G.
Morris, D.

Mulgrave, Earl of
Mullings, J. R.
Napier, J.
Neeld, J.
Newdegate, C. N.
Packe, C. W.
Pakington, Sir J.
Patten, J. W.
Peel, rt. hon. Sir R.
Peel, F.
Plowden, W. H. C.
Plumptre, J. P.
Power, N.
Prime, R.
Pugh, D.
Repton, G. W. J.
Ricardo, O.
Robinson, G. R.
Russell, Lord J.
Russell, F. C. H.
Sheil, rt. hon. R. L.
Shelburne, Earl of
Sheridan, R. B.
Simeon, J.
Slaney, R. A.
Smith, J. A.
Smith, M. T.
Smyth, J. G.
Somerville, rt. hon. Sir W.
Spooner, R.
Stanley, E.
Stanton, W. H.
Staunton, Sir G. T.
Taylor, T. E.
Tollemache, J.
Townshend, Capt.
Trevor, hon. G. R.
Tyrell, Sir J. T.
Verner, Sir H.
Waddington, H. S.
Walpole, S. H.
Walsh, Sir J. B.
Williamson, Sir H.
Wilson, M.
Wood, rt. hon. Sir C.
Wortley, rt. hon. J. S.
Young, Sir J.

TELLERS.
Tufnell, H.
Grey, R. W.

List of the NOES.

Anderson, A.
Bass, M. T.
Bouverie, hon. E. P.
Brown, W.
Caulfeild, J. M.
Cobden, R.
Crawford, W. S.
Divett, E.
Duff, G. S.
Duncan, G.
Dundas, Sir D.
Ellice, rt. hon. E.
Ellis, J.
Evans, Sir De L.
Evans, W.
Ewart, W.
Ferguson, Col.
Fordyce, A. D.
Forster, M.
Fox, W. J.

Glyn, G. C.
Hanmer, Sir J.
Hastie, A.
Hastie, A.
Headlam, T. E.
Henry, A.
Heyworth, L.
Hindley, C.
Howard, hon. C. W. G.
Humphery, Ald.
Jackson, W.
Langston, J. H.
Lushington, C.
Mahon, The O'Gorman
Martin, J.
Melgund, Visct.
Mitchell, T. A.
Moffatt, G.
Molesworth, Sir W.
Mowatt, F.

Muntz, G. F.
O'Connell, J.
O'Flaherty, A.
Ogle, S. C H.
Ord, W.
Osborne, R.
Pechell, Capt.
Pilkington, J.
Rawdon, Col.
Ricardo, J. L.
Salwey, Col.
Scholefield, W.
Seymour, Lord
Smith, J. B.
Stansfield, W. R. C.
Stuart, Lord D.

Talbot, J. H.
Tenison, E. K.
Thicknesse, R. A.
Thompson, Col.
Thompson, G.
Thornely, T.
Trelawny, J. S.
Walmsley, Sir J.
Wawn, J. T.
Williams, J.
Wood, W. P.
Wrightson, W. B.

TELLERS.
Smith, R. N.
Hume, J.

The CHAIRMAN then put the question upon the original resolution.

MR. BANKES said, he had given notice of an Amendment, but he believed it would be more properly brought forward in Committee on the Bill. He should have been disposed at the present moment to move the omission of the words "and to make provision in respect of the said oaths for the relief of Her Majesty's subjects professing the Jewish religion;" but he understood from the Chairman that after the division which had just taken place, he was precluded from so doing, the Committee having decided that these words should stand part of the question, and consequently he could only take a division on the whole of the resolution. Now, he did not object to the whole of the resolution, because he did not object to an alteration in the words of the oath, provided the alteration was for the better; but he entirely dissented from any arrangement for the admission of the Jewish subjects of the realm into Parliament. The right hon. Gentleman who had just divided the Committee had answered his own proposition, because if he felt there was any use in the oath, binding the conscience and honour of persons to the Sovereign, he (Mr. Bankes) had an equal right, on the part of the Established Church, to require a similar security. The words which he wished to introduce into the oath now under consideration were contained in the Roman Catholic oath, and he did not see why they should not be introduced for the purpose of binding the honour and conscience of those persons who were not adherents of the Established Church. These words were introduced to bind the honour and conscience of Roman Catholics, and he intended to propose that they should also be binding upon those persons of the Jewish persuasion who might obtain seats in Parliament; and he could not understand why an obligation should be imposed on Roman Catholics which was not intended to be fixed on the Jews. He was ready for the sake of argument to put them both on the same footing, and if they consented to take the oath, he should feel quite satisfied that they would be bound by it. This was the nature of the proposition which he should submit to the House at the proper time; but as he could not move the Amendment now, he would not trouble the House by dividing upon the resolution. He trusted the noble Lord would turn his attention to the subject before the next stage of the measure.

LORD J. RUSSELL was glad the hon. Gentleman proposed to defer putting his Amendment until the Committee on the Bill. The hon. Gentleman supposed that inasmuch as the words he proposed were included in the Roman Catholic oath, they might properly be admitted into the oath which was about to be framed. Now with respect to the Roman Catholic oath, the words were introduced at the period of the settlement of the question of Catholic emancipation, and formed a part of the terms on which Roman Catholics were thenceforth to be admitted to sit in Parliament, the object being to protect the Established Church. But they could not suppose there was any danger of the Jews subverting or overturning the Church Establishment, whatever apprehensions might have been entertained with regard to the Roman Catholics. As he understood the hon. Gentleman, he wished to introduce the words into the oath taken by all Members: that was a different question, such an Amendment being a relaxation in favour of one class of persons, enabling them to sit in the House, would be at the same time a restriction upon Protestant Dissenters. The opinion he (Lord J. Russell) entertained before the Roman Catholic oath was proposed he entertained still, and what was now proposed would in fact operate not as terms of admission but of proscription. On these considerations, and not being of opinion that the words themselves were very fit to be introduced as a qualification for Members to sit in Parliament, and having only agreed to them in the case of the Roman Catholic oath as part of the settlement then effected, he should, when the Amendment was moved, object to their introduction as affecting the Jews or any other class except the Roman Catholics.

MR. GOULBURN only rose to express a hope, that acquiescence in the present proposal would not prejudice hon. Members who wished to oppose the Bill in future stages. He did not wish to express any opinion on the Roman Catholic oath; but the noble Lord objected to the words proposed to be introduced, on grounds which he thought were untenable. The noble Lord stated that the introduction of these words into a general oath would impose a hardship upon Dissenters. Now he (Mr. Goulburn) was not one of those who wished to impose restrictions upon Protestant Dissenters; but he could not help remembering that admission into corporate bodies was thought to be of great benefit to Dissenters, and that the test for such admission involved the taking of an oath not to exercise any power or authority the party was about to come into possession of, for the injury of the Established Protestant Church. He could not conceive that a declaration of a similar nature could operate injuriously towards Dissenting Members of the House.

LORD JOHN RUSSELL conceived that there was a very wide distinction between the test which might be fairly applied to persons admitted by the laws of the State to certain offices, and the test which was to be exacted before a person could enter into Parliament for the purposes of legislating. The two questions were totally distinct.

MR. J. O'CONNELL thought it should be decided in what position a Roman Catholic stood in that House. Were they in the same free position as Protestant Members or not? It appeared to be the opinion of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Bankes) that the restrictions in the Catholic oath, implying that they were not in a position to deal with the revenues of the Protestant Church, should be imposed on Protestant Dissenters. He did not think the conduct of the Government quite clear in this matter. Why did they not show the same regard for Catholics as others? There were Catholics here and elsewhere, men of conscience and honour, who felt that they came into Parliament with one hand tied up; others, on the contrary, did not believe that the words involved any restriction upon Members of Parliament to deal with the money of the people. He thought the time had come when the question should be decided one way or the other. No one would bow more readily than he, should a majority, or even a large minority, of that House decide that Catholics had no right to deal in any way with the revenues of the Protestant Church. The noble Lord said he would not impose a restriction on Dissenters, implying that he considered there was a restriction on Catholics. If so, let the noble Lord or let the right hon. Baronet who brought in the Emancipation Bill declare it; and let the Catholics no longer be taunted with perjury for acting as their consciences dictated. For his own part, he believed that money, so far from strengthening, injured religion; and with regard to Catholics generally, they repudiated any State provision for their Church.

Mr. H. DRUMMOND said, it was certainly somewhat new to those who had some small smattering of historical knowledge, to be told that it was a prevailing doctrine in the Catholic Church that all alliance with money and wealth was detrimental to the cause of true religion. He reminded the hon. Gentleman and the House, that if it were true that Roman Catholics had no right to vote upon subjects connected with the Protestant Church, that Protestants claimed no right to vote on matters connected with the Catholic Church. Why did not hon. Gentlemen remember and act up to the old adage, that "what was sauce for the goose was sauce for the gander?" He considered the present Motion to be an attempt to pass an *ex post facto* law against the Dissenters, and an effort by a side wind to deprive them of their privileges.

The Earl of ARUNDEL and SURREY wished to state the reason why he felt that he could not vote either for the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton, or for that which the hon. Member for Dorsetshire was to bring forward. But, first, he would reply to the hon. Member for Surrey, that the difference between Protestants voting on the Catholic church, and Catholics voting on the Protestant Church, was founded simply upon the oath which Roman Catholic Members took. As to that oath, its terms were such that many Roman Catholic gentlemen of equal honour and equal scrupulosity took different views of the obligation which it imposed. There was no compulsion on a Catholic to enter the House; but when he did so, there was a compulsion on him to take a certain oath, as a condition of his admission. Now, doubtless, the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman near him would go to relieve Roman Catholics from the oath which they took, and the inconveniences which it entailed. But then he held that if Roman Catholics negotiated and agreed to enter the House upon certain conditions, that they ought not to take advantage of their admission to abrogate those conditions. Let them take a familiar illustration. Suppose a club were to admit foreigners as members, giving them all the privileges of the institution, upon condition of their refraining from interfering, in certain respects, with the management of the club—then, supposing a number of foreigners had been thus admitted, it surely would not become them to take advantage of their membership to abolish the conditions upon promising to observe which, they had been originally admitted. He, for one, would therefore refrain from interfering in this subject at all. He should take it as a boon, if Government were to alter an oath which was differently interpreted by different honest and conscientious men; but he would neither vote for nor against such a proposition.

Mr. NEWDEGATE could not feel otherwise than highly gratified at the speech of the noble Earl who had just sat down. Would that all Roman Catholics were like him! Firm in upholding the interests of his Church — ready to promote its advancement even when it might be felt to be an invasion of the Established Church; yet he had shown that he was not disposed to avail himself of that doctrine which some Catholics believed, in that they were free from the obligations of the oath. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] He was glad to find that that was not the fact. If the oath were to be altered, he thought his hon. Friend (Mr. Bankes) had reason on his side; but he was glad his proposal was deferred.

Mr. C. ANSTEY concurred with the noble Earl the Member for Arundel in his view of the Roman Catholic oath, and the duty of Roman Catholic Members as to any proposition to alter that oath. It would be the more fair and honest course in the hon. Member for Dorsetshire to propose the introduction of words into the oath absolutely and in terms prohibiting all those who did not belong to the Church of England from in any way interfering with the temporalities of the Church of England. That was, no doubt, the real intention, as regarded Roman Catholics, of the original framers of the oath. He felt it to be his duty to give effect to that intention; his only regret being that it was conveyed in such an ambiguous manner as to leave Roman Catholic Members in doubt as to which way they ought to take it.

Mr. NAPIER observed, that the object for which the Emancipation Act was passed, as explained by the right hon. Baronet on introducing it, was to extend to the Catholics civil and religious privileges, and at the same time to secure the rights of the Established Church; and he was glad to find that the interpretation put on that Act by Dr. Doyle, and other high Roman Catholic authorities, was that it was a compact entered into by the Legislature on the one hand, and the Catholics on the other, one condition of which was that the influence thus acquired by that body should not be used to the prejudice of the Protestant Church, and that nothing could exonerate the Catholics from the conditions thus imposed. He was glad to find that the interpretation which was put upon the compact by Protestants was shared in not only by those authorities, but by the noble Earl and other Catholic Members of Parliament, and that it was in no way opposed to the tenets of the Catholic faith.

Mr. SHEIL thought it incumbent on him, as a Catholic Member, to state that his view of the obligation imposed by the Roman Catholic oath did not coincide with the interpretation put upon it by the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. J. O'Connell), nor with that of his noble Friend (the Earl of Arundel and Surrey) behind him. If the interpretation of his noble Friend—which had obtained for him the panegyric of the hon. and learned Member opposite (Mr. Napier)—if that were correct, no Roman Catholic could have voted for the Church Temporalities Bill. No Roman Catholic could have voted for the diminution of the number of bishops in Ireland, nor for the abolition of church cess, the effect of which had been to diminish the revenues of the Established Church indirectly to the extent of 60,000*l.* a year. There was a great distinction between the total subversion of the Church, and a modification or even a diminution of its revenues, if they left an adequate sum not only for the maintenance of the spiritual establishment, but for its temporal sustainment as one of the institutions of the country. He did not think it proper on this occasion to enter into an examination of the exact words of the oath; but would content himself with referring the hon. and learned Member to the observation made by Sir C. Wetherell at the time the terms of that oath were settled. Sir C. Wetherell said, using a forensic expression, that the terms were wide enough to drive a coach and four through them. What more easy than to make a Roman Catholic swear that he would not employ his civil privileges to diminish the temporal possessions of the Established Church? If that were the interpretation of the oath, why was there not a declaratory Act? He could not agree with the hon. Member for Limerick, that if a particular vote were passed by a majority, or even a large minority of the House, putting a different interpretation upon the oath, he would consider himself bound by it. He (Mr. Sheil) preferred the well-known legal maxim, that the oath was to be taken and construed *secundum sensum impositum.* Still the difficulty arose, what was the intention of the Legislature? His interpretation was, that he was bound both in conscience and honour not to attempt the subversion or overthrow of the Established Church; still that he was at full liberty to make such alterations in its temporalities and revenues as should be consistent with its general advantage, and its due and permanent maintenance.

The Earl of ARUNDEL and SURREY: The speech of the right hon. Member only proves what I have said as to the different interpretations put by men of the highest honour upon the oath.

Mr. J. O'CONNELL thought the House ought to consider whether the present uncertainty respecting the oath taken by Roman Catholic Members should any longer exist. He was willing to see such a declaratory Act as that referred to by the right hon. the Master of the Mint introduced, in order that the terms of the oath might be explained, because at present he was placed in a somewhat painful position. He had a notice of Motion for Monday, by which a new modification of the revenues of the Church of England was proposed; but of course he would not submit it if he found that, in interfering in Church matters, he was acting contrary to the oath he had taken. The question, however, resolved itself into this—were the Catholics emancipated or were they not? Irish Catholics had won emancipation for themselves and the English Catholics; and, although two of the latter had spoken their views that evening, yet they must recollect that whatever understanding other, had come into Parliament upon, the Irish Catholics had not entered the House with their hands tied. The case alluded to by the noble Earl (the Earl of Arundel and Surrey), was inapplicable, because the Irish Catholics would have rejected emancipation were it clogged with any objectionable conditions. The question, however, which had now arisen was in every respect a most important one, for it resolved itself into this—whether the people of Ireland, who paid their money to the support of the Church of the minority, were to have no voice in any matter pertaining to the temporalities of that establishment. He called upon the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth to answer this interrogatory, and to explain the views he entertained in proposing the Roman Catholic oath.

SIR R. PEEL: Even if the hon. Gentleman's impression were correct, that the oath to which he refers was first introduced on my recommendation, it appears to me that I should be acting improperly if I were to declare what in my opinion is the proper construction to be put upon that oath. The adoption of that oath by whomsoever proposed was the act of the House of Commons and of the Legislature. Since the period of its imposition, many votes have been given by Roman Catholic Members in this House. I am sure that hon. Gentlemen will do me the justice to admit that, since the year 1829, I have never insinuated against any Roman Catholic Member of Parliament that he has given a vote on any particular subject from other than conscientious motives. If the Legislature be dissatisfied with the course which hon. Gentlemen may have taken in this House, it is the duty of the Legislature to establish some new rule for the guidance of those Members, and to declare by a new enactment what is its intention with respect to Roman Catholic Members of this House. But it is not the duty of any Member to declare his own individual opinion on the proper construction of an oath, in order that that opinion may be a rule for the guidance of others in the discharge of their public duty. The hon. Gentleman is, however, in error in supposing that this oath was introduced by me. Before I notice the oath, I will briefly advert to a proposal made, I believe, by my right hon. and lamented Friend, Sir R. Wilmot Horton, expressly providing that Roman Catholic Members should not be permitted to vote on questions affecting the interests, spiritual or temporal, of the Established Church. I stated my objections to the introduction of any such proposal, and said—

> "My right hon. Friend has proposed, with a view to calm the suspicions and fears of those who object to the admission of Roman Catholics to Parliament, that the Roman Catholic Member should be disqualified by law from voting on matters relating, directly or indirectly, to the interests of the Established Church. There appear to me numerous and cogent objections to this proposal. In the first place, it is dangerous to establish the precedent of limiting by law the discretion by which the duties and functions of a Member of Parliament are to be exercised. In the second, it is difficult to define, beforehand, what are the questions which affect the interests of the Church. A question which has no immediate apparent connexion with the Church, might have a practical bearing upon its welfare ten times more important than another question which might appear directly to concern it. Thirdly, by excluding the Roman Catholic from giving his individual vote, you do little to diminish his real influence, if you leave him the power of speaking—of biasing the judgments of others—on the question on which he is not himself to vote, and if, by a jealous and distrusting but ineffectual precaution, you tempt him to exercise to your prejudice the remaining power of which you cannot, or do not, propose to deprive him. I believe there is more of real security in confidence than in avowed mistrust and suspicion, unaccompanied by effectual guards. For these reasons, I am unwilling to deprive the Roman Catholic Members of either House of Parliament of any privilege of free discussion and free exercise of judgment which belongs to other Members of the Legislature."

The Act of 1829, did, however, require an oath to be taken by Roman Catholic Members on taking their seat. That oath, however, was in substance not then proposed for the first time, but adopted from the Act of the Irish Parliament, which in the year 1793 removed the greater part of the disabilities affecting the Roman Catholics. The oath in question was required to be taken as the condition of relief from those disabilities. The oath had been previously imposed in the year 1774 by the Act which removed the restrictions on the tenure of landed property by Roman Catholics. The oath in question had the full assent of the Roman Catholic body when it was originally imposed, and no objection had been subsequently offered to its requirements. This oath being an existing security—a security taken at previous periods with the consent of the Roman Catholic body—was adopted in substance in 1829, and was required from Roman Catholics as the condition of the exercise of legislative functions. The oath imposed by the Act of 1793 was to this effect:—

> "I do solemnly swear that I will defend, to the utmost of my power, the settlement and arrangement of property in this country as established by the laws. I do hereby disclaim, disavow, and solemnly abjure any intention to subvert the present Church Establishment, or substi-

tute a Catholic establishment in its stead; and I do solemnly swear that I will not exercise any privilege to which I am or may become entitled, to disturb or weaken the Protestant religion or the Protestant Government in this kingdom. So help me, God!"

Every Roman Catholic appointed to office under the Act of 1793, every freeholder exercising the elective franchise, had this oath put to him, and had the same obligation which the Roman Catholic Member now has, to consider the true meaning and purport of the oath. I am content to leave that question to be determined by each Roman Catholic Member of Parliament after mature reflexion on the terms of the oath. I believe that his decision, whatever it may be, will be a conscientious one. Until some new rule be established, the conscientious convictions of each Member must be his guide—at any rate, I cannot undertake to declare what is the proper construction to be placed upon the oath in question.

MR. J. O'CONNELL said, it now appeared, from the course the discussion had taken, that this question must now be settled *animo recipientis*. He wished to see a short declaratory Bill introduced which would settle the matter at once; and to its provisions, if adopted, he promised to yield a ready acquiescence. He admitted that the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth had never accused the Catholic Members of perjury; but, then, his silence, when the charge was advanced, had operated prejudicially, so far as their characters were concerned. He reminded the right hon. Baronet that there was a considerable difference between the emancipation oath and the oath of 1793; and he had always been of opinion that, according to the words in which the former was couched, he was not precluded from speaking and voting on the temporalities of the Irish Church. He was perfectly willing to adopt the language used by the right hon. Gentleman the Master of the Mint on this subject, and to withdraw what he had himself previously said when adverting to the oath.

MR. LAW said, that in suffering the resolution to pass without requiring the House to divide upon it, he wished to state, that he reserved to himself the full power of pressing the subject to a division on a future occasion.

Main Question agreed to:—Resolution to be reported.

Resolution reported, and agreed to:—Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bernal, Lord John Russell, and Sir George Grey.

The Chairman reported progress, and the House resumed.

RELIEF OF DISTRESS (IRELAND) BILL.

On the Order of the Day for the Second Reading of this Bill,

MR. HUME protested against the measure, upon the ground that it would cause an extravagant expenditure of the public money, and intimated that, although he should decline dividing on the present stage of the measure, the House would certainly be divided upon it at a future one.

Bill read a second time.

IRISH COLLEGES.

MR. BANKES said, he had been given to understand that the colleges established by the Government in Ireland were now supposed to be useless. He wished to know if they were in operation, or if any salaries were being paid to the professors and masters?

LORD J. RUSSELL replied, that there had been a sum voted by Parliament for the erection and maintenance of these colleges, and that the buildings were now nearly completed. They would be ready in the month of October, and a great many professors had already been appointed. So far from the colleges being useless, a great many persons of the highest respectability in the Roman Catholic Church were their warm supporters.

VICE-GUARDIANS OF UNIONS (IRELAND) BILL.

On the Order of the Day for the Second Reading of this Bill,

MR. HUME asked the noble Lord what other measures for Ireland he intended to bring forward in the present Session? Did he intend to stand by the Irish Church as it now exists, or did he not? That was the question.

LORD J. RUSSELL said, that it was not his intention to give any notice of Motion respecting the Irish Church.

MR. BERNAL OSBORNE reiterated the question of the hon. Member for Montrose, with respect to the Irish measures of the Government.

LORD J. RUSSELL said, that the Government were not prepared to state, in answer to a question given without notice, what were the whole of the measures which the Government intended to propose during the present Session with regard to Ireland. His right hon. Friend the Secretary for Ireland had stated the views of the Government with respect to three of those measures; and he should himself be prepared, on a future occasion, to state what further measures the Government had in contemplation.

The EARL of LINCOLN expressed a hope that the period of paying the vice-guardians would be postponed to the 26th of March, 1850, as the winter six months were the most important season for the vice-guardians to discharge their duties efficiently, and their payment might not be provided for beyond September if the Bill stood as at present, and Parliament was prorogued at the usual time.

SIR G. GREY said, in reply, that the Government had the subject mentioned by the noble Earl under their consideration.

House adjourned at a quarter after Seven o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, February 26, 1849.

MINUTES.] PUBLIC BILLS.—1ª Consolidated Fund; Commons Inclosure.

Reported.—Marriage (Scotland).

3ª and passed:—Inland Revenue; Habeas Corpus Suspension (Ireland).

PETITIONS PRESENTED. From Glasgow, against the Marriage (Scotland) Bill; also, against Registering Births, &c. (Scotland) Bill.

HABEAS CORPUS SUSPENSION (IRELAND) BILL.

The MARQUESS of LANSDOWNE moved the Third Reading of the Habeas Corpus Suspension (Ireland) Bill.

LORD BROUGHAM could only repeat his former observations upon the Bill. He believed it to be absolutely necessary for Ireland. In reference to the conduct of one of the jurors on a recent trial in that country, he would take that opportunity of saying that on the other night he had understated his misconduct. This person, not content with showing himself a thorough partisan throughout the trial, had declared, before the jury retired to deliberate, that no consideration on earth should induce him to give a verdict for the Crown—though he had sworn to do justice equally between the Crown and the prisoner. But that was not all. This same juror, after he had left the court-house, upon the discharge of the jury, got into a car and harangued the mob, hurraing along with them; and in this manner marched to his inn, hurraing as if in triumph—he being the only one of the jurors who took the view of the case which caused their discharge, as he had reason to suppose. He would, however, have jurors to know that they were responsible to the law as much as the vilest criminal they tried; and that they were not protected, in their capacity of jurors, against any outrage against the administration of justice. He had also to say that some of the counsel engaged had treated the court worse than ever he had known in his not short experience of practice. Never were Judges worse treated than the reverend Judges on that trial had been by some of those counsel. In so treating the learned and reverend Judges, it seemed quite clear to him that the counsel in question were acting in such a manner as to put a quarrel upon the court, that they might then be able to make an appeal to the multitude out of doors, and say they had got no justice. The conduct of the court, however, was beyond all praise; they had behaved with perfect dignity, tempered with perfect suavity, in respect of all those persons from whom they had received these insults.

LORD CAMPBELL agreed with the sentiments of his noble and learned Friend as regarded the conduct of the juror alluded to. But he went further than his noble and learned Friend; for he maintained that a juror was not exempt from punishment for a violation of the law, even while in the jury-box. A juror coming into the box, who had corruptly made up his mind to acquit or convict, and who, in accordance with that determination, cheered and interrupted the court, was, in his opinion, liable in law; and he had no doubt that if his conduct were subjected to the decision of another jury, the verdict would be, that he had not acted conscientiously but corruptly.

LORD BROUGHAM went along with his noble Friend. A juror who misconducted himself in the box might be punished. It was only ignorant persons who believed that a juryman could not be punished for what he did in the jury-box since the repeal of the Attaint Act. The very next clause in Sir R. Peel's Bill provided a punishment for jurors who misconducted themselves.

Bill read 3ª and passed.

House adjourned till To-morrow.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, February 26, 1849.

MINUTES.] NEW MEMBERS SWORN.—For Cardigan, Pryse Pryse, Esq.; For Donegal, Thomas Conolly, Esq.

PUBLIC BILLS.—2° Overseers (Cities and Boroughs); Outdoor Paupers.

Reported.—Relief of Distress (Ireland); Vice-Guardians of Unions (Ireland); Petty Sessions; Distraining for Rates.

PETITIONS PRESENTED. By Mr. Philip Miles, from George Turner, and Others, respecting Lay Clerks at Cathedral Churches.—By Mr. Sharman Crawford, from Rochdale, for an Alteration of the Law respecting the Church of England Clergy.—By Mr. Scott, from New South Wales, respecting a Constitution for that Colony.—By Mr. Cowan, from the Parish of Currie, Edinburgh; and by Sir T. Birch, from the Letterpress Printers of Liverpool, for a Repeal of the Paper Duty.—By Viscount Bernard, from the Parish of Kilrogan, Bandon, for Encouragement to Schools in Connexion with the Church Education Society (Ireland).—By Sir Thomas Birch, from Merchants, and Others, Inhabitants of Liverpool, for Reduction in the Public Expenditure.—By Sir J. Johnstone, from Shipowners, and Others, of the Port of Scarborough, against a Repeal of the Navigation Laws.—By Sir W. Verner, from Ratepayers of Carrowbrack, in the County of Armagh, for an Alteration of the Poor Law (Ireland).—By Mr. John Williams, from Samuel Sanders, late a Clerk in the Money Order Department of the General Post Office, for Inquiry into his Case.—By Mr. Divett, from Exeter, for the Suppression of the Slave Trade.—By Sir Edward Buxton, from Merchants, and Others, of Braintree, in the County of Essex, for an Alteration of the Small Debts Act.—By Mr. Du Pre, from several Inhabitants of Brill, and its Vicinity, Bucks, for Referring War Disputes to Arbitration.

WAR IN THE PUNJAUB.

MR. G. THOMPSON said, he rose to solicit the indulgence of the House, to whose impartiality and courtesy he appealed, while for a few moments he spoke in explanation of a matter personal to himself, touching the correctness of a statement he had made in his place in Parliament a few evenings since upon an important subject, and the answer given to that statement by a Minister of the Crown. It would be in the recollection of the House that on Friday last he put a question to the right hon. Baronet (Sir J. C. Hobhouse), the President of the Board of Control, relative to the papers connected with the war in the Punjaub. The question was asked in the precise words of which notice had been given the day before, and was founded upon two facts referred to in the terms of the question—namely, that the war in the Punjaub had been going on since April, 1848, and that it had occasioned the calling into the field of 120,000 men, including camp followers. The right hon. Baronet, in replying to the question—and upon the style and manner of that reply he (Mr. Thompson) would make no comment—thought it his duty to give a flat contradiction to both the facts referred to. "It was not the fact," he said, "that the war in the Punjaub dated as far back as April, 1848; the original of the war was of a much later date. He also denied that the army in the field amounted to 120,000 men. He did not know whether camp followers meant camels and things of that sort. The fact was that the forces did not amount to half that number, nor anything like as many." It was in vindication of the accuracy of the statement so denied, that he ventured to claim permission of the House to occupy a very small portion of its time—a favour which he trusted would not be denied, as it was of the utmost importance to the character of every Member that he should prove the accuracy of the assertions he made in that House. In the absence of those official papers which it was his most anxious wish to see laid upon the table, he had had recourse to the ordinary channels of information—the newspapers published in India. Those journals had informed him that on the 5th of April, 1848, Mr. Vans Agnew, of the Bengal civil service, in the capacity of an assistant political agent, and Lieutenant Anderson, of the Bombay Fusiliers, in command of a small force of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, were despatched from Lahore to remove the Dewan Moolraj from the government of Mooltan, and to instal the Sirdar Khan Singh in his place; that they arrived at Mooltan on the 16th of April; that on the 17th they were set upon by some rebel soldiers belonging to Mooltan; that they defended themselves in a small fort on the outside of the town; but that on the 20th the principal part of their escort deserted to the insurgents, and the two gentlemen named perished. This he (Mr. Thompson) had thought it right to regard as the origin and commencement of the war in the Punjaub. From the same journals he learnt that on the first intelligence of the disturbance at Mooltan, the chief of Bhawulpore despatched forces to the relief of the British officers, which arrived too late to render any service; that on the news reaching Lahore Major Edwardes was ordered to march on Mooltan, with the Sikh troops under his command; that some regiments of the Lahore service, under two distinguished Sikh chiefs, were directed to march towards Mooltan, and that two moveable brigades, one from Ferozepore and one from Lahore, consisting of 3,000 men each, were directed to march on the 27th, and to unite on the banks of the Ravee on their way to Mooltan. Below Mooltan, on the Indus, a steamer was despatched up the river by Colonel Shaw, with a company of native infantry and two guns; and Major Jacob, with a squadron of the Scinde horse, was sent to watch the frontier. It was quite true, that when all doubt had ceased at Lahore respecting the death of Messrs. Anderson and Agnew, it was resolved to suspend decisive operations, pending a reference to the Governor General and the Commander in Chief; but it was not less true, according to every statement in the Indian papers, that prior to the 2nd day of May a small force of irregular cavalry and artillery was despatched from Loodianah to the aid of Bhawulpore; that another of irregular cavalry and artillery was sent from Lahore to Govindghur; that a detachment of Sikh troops were ordered towards Mooltan; that the defences of Lahore were strengthened; that the political agents at the out-stations were called in; that all officers absent on leave were ordered to join their regiments; and that the troops along the whole of the right bank of the Sutlej were required to hold themselves in readiness to march at a moment's notice. At the same time, Major Edwardes, Colonel Cortlandt, and the Nawaub of Bhawulpore, were taking measures to unite their forces, and bring them into the field against the Dewan of Mooltan. Such were the notorious facts upon which he had founded his statement on Friday last, that the origin and commencement of the war in the Punjaub dated from the month of April, 1848. If anything else were needed to prove this, there was the proclamation of the Lahore Government, dated the 18th of May, which was a formal declaration of war against Moolraj, and contained the threat to "root him out from the face of the earth, and bring him to entire destruction and everlasting perdition." He would now say a word upon the denial of the right hon. Baronet, that the army in the field in the Punjaub amounted to 120,000, including camp followers. He held in his hand a return of all the troops now in the field in the Punjaub and at Mooltan, including the reserve at Sirhind. The following was an abstract: — The grand army under Lord Gough amounted to 21,020; the Lahore force under General Wheeler to 5,510; Brigadier Wheeler's own force to 2,360; the reserved force under General Hill to 5,800; the Mooltan force under General Whish to 7,580; and the Bombay Mooltan force under Brigadier Dundas to 6,750: making a grand total of 49,020 men, exclusive of from 15,000 to 20,000 native auxiliaries. So much for fighting men. Some days previously to the question put to the President of the Board of Control, a pamphlet had been published in the form of a letter from General Sir Charles James Napier, late Governor of Scinde, to the Right Hon. Sir John Cam Hobhouse. In that letter, the gallant General informed Sir John Cam Hobhouse that—

> "The usual calculation is, that for every fighting man in the high-caste Bengal army, there are five servants, or 'camp followers'—non-combatants. In the Bombay army, where the caste is generally lower, there are about three camp followers for every fighting man. That an army in march, consisting of 10,000 fighting men, amounts in the mass from 40,000 to 60,000 men; that the general must feed this crowd of non-combatants, and their animals."

The statement of General Napier was fully confirmed by a military writer in the *Delhi Gazette* of October the 25th, who, speaking of the preparations for the war in the Punjaub, says—

> "The number of men to be assembled at Ferozepore amounts, more or less, to 20,000 men. Their camp followers will exceed 100,000; but we will take them at that figure."

Now, assuming the correctness of General Napier and the writer in the *Delhi Gazette*, whose statements confirm each other, and taking the Bombay troops in the Punjaub at 10,000, and the Bengal at 39,000, there were 30,000 camp followers attached to the former, and 195,000 to the latter, making 225,000 in all; which, added to the 49,000 fighting men, gave a grand total of no less than 274,000 men in the field. In the statement made on Friday, he (Mr. Thompson) had set down the fighting men at 40,000, and the camp followers (two to each soldier) at 80,000, making, together, the number 120,000. He had now demonstrated how greatly below the actual amount were the numbers he had stated. With this explanation, he was content to leave the matter with the House, and also the question of expense, which would be determined when the accounts were produced.

MR. ELLIOT said, that his right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Control was not able to attend at that hour in his place, but he would be there in the course of the evening. With regard to the statement made by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets, he could only say that when the hon. Gentleman had said on Friday night that the war had been going on in the Punjaub since April 18, his right hon. Friend replied that he was in error, that war not having commenced for a considerable time afterwards—not in reality until the 18th of June, when Lieutenant Edwardes obtained his victory. But that war was not one between the Affghans and Sikhs; it was a war on account of the Sikh Government against Moolraj. The war did not really begin until Shere Singh took the field. As to the number of camp followers, his (Mr. Elliot's) right hon. Friend could not tell anything about them. He could only say, so far as he had reason to believe, that there was not half the number mentioned by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets. The hon. Gentleman had assumed the cost of the war to be 5,000,000*l.* To that his right hon. Friend replied, that he could not tell what the war had cost, and that it was quite impossible for the hon. Gentleman to know it. But he (Mr. Elliot) was most anxious to call attention to the manner in which the question had been originally put, the reply having been occasioned entirely by the form of the question. The hon. Member had put, in fact, a little speech upon the Paper; and his right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Control was obliged to make a speech in order to answer it. He trusted hon. Members for the future would put their questions upon the Paper in such a way as would enable an answer to be given plainly and briefly to them, so that they could be answered without leading to a debate.

Subject at an end.

FINANCIAL REFORM—MR. HUME'S PLAN.

MR. HUME said, that he had given notice of his intention to move, on the Motion that Mr. Speaker leave the chair, to go into Committee of Supply, that, in the present state of the finances of the country, Her Majesty's Ministers, before calling on this House to vote the Estimates for the public service, should submit a general financial statement of the whole or expected revenues, and the total intended expenditure for the ensuing financial year. He had come down perfectly prepared to carry out the resolution; but he was sorry to find from the Speaker, that, by the resolution passed a few nights ago, they were shut out from moving more than one amendment upon the question of going into Committee of Supply. When he (Mr. Hume) moved the resolution, he, and those about him, certainly thought they were in the same position as before with regard to the Committee of Supply; but they now found they were mistaken, and that the decision then come to told against them. He was sorry to find they could have no more than one amendment, because it shut him out from a discussion upon a most important point. However, he suffered by his own act. Last year when a plan was proposed in order to forward public business, he certainly did consider that an end might be put to the interminable discussions which took place, not only on general occasions, but also on going into Committees of Ways and Means and Supply; but he thought that the Ways and Means and Supply would form exceptions. He was completely taken in by his own act. He thought it necessary to say this much, because the opportunity was past for making his Motion, and he was most anxious that the Motion of his hon. Friend (Mr. Cobden) should be proceeded with before any votes were agreed to. He was, therefore, compelled to postpone his resolution; and in another Session he would take care and try if the system could not be altered which prevented their having more than one Motion upon going into Committee of Supply. He was the first victim to his own folly, and he was compelled, in consequence, to postpone his Motion until Friday next, when he begged to give notice he should move it on going into a Committee of Ways and Weans. He should, for the present, withdraw it, and make way for his hon. Friend the Member for the West Riding, hoping that he would be as successful as he deserved to be.

DISTRESS (IRELAND)—INACCURATE RETURNS.

MR. STAFFORD wished to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he had taken any steps to correct the mistakes in the returns lately presented from the poor-law officers in Ireland, which had rendered these returns of no value whatever? or, if he had not, he begged to call the right hon. Gentleman's attention to the fourth page in these returns, where he would find a mistake amounting to 8,500*l.*

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, he had compared the printed papers with the originals sent from Ireland, and he found that the printed papers were accurate transcripts of the originals. He had written by that very post to Ireland desiring that these mistakes might be corrected, and also wishing to know whether these mistakes had originated in the summing up, or in the details.

ENGLISH WORKMEN IN FRANCE.

Mr. B. COCHRANE wished to ask the noble Lord at the head of the Government the question of which he had given him notice, with respect to the intention of the French Government to make compensation to those English workmen who had deposited part of their earnings in the savings banks of France, but who were obliged to leave that country at the Revolution, without obtaining the return of their little all.

Lord J. RUSSELL said, his noble Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had been in correspondence with the French Government on the subject, and he found that the French Government were ready to pay the sums so soon as the parties claiming them could be identified.

RECTORY OF BISHOP WEARMOUTH.

Mr. HORSMAN said, he believed since the noble Lord at the head of the Government answered a question put by him (Mr. Horsman) some days ago, he had received a communication from the Bishop of Durham, requesting him to correct some inaccuracies into which, in that answer, the noble Lord fell. As the matter related to a subject in respect to which he had given notice of a Motion, he should not refer to it on this occasion; but he considered it not only just to give the noble Lord the opportunity of correcting the inaccuracies to which he alluded, but that his attention should be directed, before the discussion on the Motion came on, to certain other particulars in which the answer which had been given, was, as he had since been informed, neither satisfactory nor correct. The subject to which he referred was the rearrangement in the distribution of the revenues of the rectory of Bishop Wearmouth; and the facts of the case were these. During the last autumn this rich rectory became vacant by the demise of Dr. Wellesley, the late incumbent, and that event becoming known, it was supposed that such a redistribution of the temporal revenues of the living would be made as should seem adequate provision for the spiritual wants of the district. He had, therefore, inquired of the noble Lord whether he could inform the House if such redistribution of the temporalities of the rectory had been carried into effect, and, if so, what was the nature of it. The noble Lord gave an answer—not his own certainly—but speaking on the information he obtained from the brief he held in his hand at the moment, namely, a communication from the Bishop of Durham; and if, as he believed was the case, the information contained in that brief was incorrect, the noble Lord had as much reason to complain as he (Mr. Horsman) had. That answer involved four points: first, it referred to the gross income of the rectory; secondly, to the future income of the incumbent; thirdly, to the application of the surplus revenue; and, fourthly, the feeling of the inhabitants of the parish in regard to such redistribution, and the manner in which it would affect their spiritual interests. In each of these four points the answer he had received from the noble Lord was, he was sorry to say, not of that accurate character which might have been expected. He was quite aware that the errors were not intentional. He was aware that human infirmity was always liable to errors; and in no case would it be more so, he imagined, than on subjects of ecclesiastical revenue, elucidated by episcopal returns. With regard to the first point, the noble Lord stated that the gross income of the benefice was 3,800*l.* a year. He (Mr. Horsman) was informed that that was much under the mark. The items of income which had been given to him in detail, and which, though he could not go into them now, he would explain when the Motion of which he had given notice came on for discussion, showed that the actual income of the living was much over that sum. That was according to the information he had received. On the other three points, however, he could speak with more confidence. As to the second—the setting apart a certain portion of the future income of the rector to the payment of curates, limiting the income of the incumbent to 1,200*l.* a year—he believed he was perfectly correct in saying, that no such arrangement had or could have been made, and that it was notorious that the minimum income which had been secured to the future incumbent was more than 2,000*l.* a year. With such an income, and in a parish of more than 30,000 souls, it would appear almost a matter of course that the incumbent should keep curates, and, of course, also, that he should pay them. Yet no stipulation had been made binding on him; and no stipulation binding on his successors could be made to pay 800*l.* a year out of the 2,000*l.* for that purpose. Then, again, it was said, that the surplus of 1,600*l.* a year was to be divided amongst the four poor incumbents of the adjoining chapelries. Upon this point he believed the noble Lord had, since he gave the answer, received more correct information; and so surprised was he (Mr. Horsman) at the time, that, at the risk of being called to order by the Speaker, he rose three times and repeated the question, doubting whether he had heard the noble Lord correctly; yet on each occasion the noble Lord repeated the same statement; and after referring to the paper he held in his hand, saying that there was no doubt of the fact being as he had stated it, and that such redistribution—that was the setting apart the coal rents and wayleave rents for the benefit of these four chapelries—would commence from the 13th of May. The astonishment which that answer occasioned was, as might be expected, considerable; and several Gentlemen came to him to join in congratulations on the noble conduct of the Bishop of Durham; and how anxiously the four poor incumbents were looking forward to the 13th of May, when their incomes were—according to the statement of the Prime Minister—to be so materially increased, might be more easily conceived than described. Others, again, shook their heads, and, knowing something of the matter themselves, complained that the noble Lord had, in a speech of only three or four minutes' duration, been made the medium of communicating more misconception than had ever before been put forward within the same short space of time. But the fourth point of the noble Lord's reply was the most strange and extraordinary of all. And the statement, in this respect, was so peculiarly rich, as showing what a large pediment of fiction might be built upon the smallest base of truth, that he could not forbear calling attention to it. The parishioners, they were told, were satisfied, and grateful to the Bishop for the change which had been made; and the ancient vestry of Bishop Wearmouth was brought into court to make the House believe it. They were told that a deputation from this vestry had been received by the Bishop, and had made the suggestions on which this new arrangement was founded; and that afterwards the head of that deputation had expressed their thanks to the right rev. Prelate in a letter for having so readily complied with their request. The letter which had thus been addressed to the Bishop of Durham, had been, he understood, transmitted by the right rev. Prelate to the noble Lord, and was read by him to the House; and if it was meant to infer anything, it was that the deputation had represented a more numerous body of the vestry, who represented the wishes of the inhabitants of the parish generally in the matter. On this point, however, he must take leave to undeceive the noble Lord, and show him not only that he had been misled, but that the whole story of the vestry, and the deputation, and the letter of thanks, should be regarded rather as a hoax than anything else. The facts were, that the ancient select vestry was so select, that it was self-elected. Its business was usually transacted by three or four individuals, and he was told that on the occasion alluded to, these gentlemen met and constituted themselves a vestry. Then they resolved themselves into a deputation from the vestry to the Bishop, and in that character proceeded to the Bishop of Durham, and made certain suggestions to him as to the rectory of Bishop Wearmouth, which had become vacant. They received their answer, and, returning, reported to the vestry they were deputed by, namely, themselves; and, having so reported to themselves the answer received by themselves, they lay aside the character of a deputation and again become a vestry representing the inhabitants of the parish; and on behalf of the inhabitants from whom the whole of the proceedings had been kept secret, they write a letter to the Bishop, thanking him for his attention to the wishes of the parishioners, the said parishioners hearing nothing of the proposed arrangement until the whole affair was concluded. Such, as he was informed, were the real circumstances of the case, and he had felt himself bound to bring them under the notice of the noble Lord. He wished now to ask the noble Lord, whether in any of the points referred to in his former answer as to the gross income of the rectory—the future income of the incumbent—the application of the surplus revenue, or the feeling of the parishioners as represented by the ancient vestry—the statements contained in the noble Lord's previous answer were in any respect inaccurate and requiring correction?

Lord J. RUSSELL wished to make an explanation as to one point in the former answer he had given to the hon. Gentleman on this subject. The hon. Gentleman had touched upon the four points to which that answer referred; in the first, as to the income received by the late Dr. Wellesley, which he (Lord J. Russell) stated, on the information of the Bishop of Durham, at 3,800*l.* a year; the hon. Gentleman said that that income was much larger: upon this point it was impossible for him to say whether the statement he had made was correct or not. The hon. Gentleman then stated that he believed the present incumbent would receive much more than 1,200*l.* a year. On that point also he had no further information to give than he had received, and which he had stated in answer to the hon. Gentleman's question. With regard to the third point, there was certainly an error—not as the hon. Gentleman supposed in the statements which had been sent to him by the Bishop of Durham, but in his reading of it. The Bishop of Durham stated, that the wayleaves and coal rents would be placed in the hands of trustees for the benefit of the chapelries. He found on looking at the receipts from these sources that they amounted to about 1,600*l.* a year; and when the hon. Gentleman asked if 1,600*l.* a year would be paid to the incumbents of the other chapelries, he concluded that that was the contemplated arrangement, and said so. But in that inference it since appeared that he had been mistaken, the actual state of the case being, as the Bishop of Durham informed him, that—

> "After the 13th of May the funds arising from wayleaves and coals will be paid to trustees (the bishop and rector). They will pay to each chapelry at least the amount they at present receive, so long as the wayleaves remain. Any surplus will be put into the funds to accumulate for the spiritual benefit of the parish and its chapelries; but not to add one farthing to the income of the incumbent. Among other objects, greatly desired, is the building of a church at Hendon, in the parish of Bishopwearmouth, some two or three miles from the mother church, with, I am told, 6,000 inhabitants. I have little doubt but we shall improve the present payments to the chapels, in proportion to the population; but, so long as the question of the wayleaves remains unsettled, we do not think it prudent to hold out expectations which it may not be in our power to gratify."

It appeared that there were some questions in dispute as to these wayleaves, and so long as those questions remained unsettled, the trustees would not think it prudent to increase the incomes of the chapelries. With regard to the last point, that he had said the inhabitants generally were satisfied with the arrangement; the statement he received was, that the memorialists were satisfied, and that he believed was the statement he had made to the hon. Gentleman. The ancient vestry sent a memorial to the bishop, with the prayer of which he generally complied. Whether the inhabitants generally, or how many of them, were satisfied with the arrangement, he could not state, as he had received no information on that point. The hon. Gentleman expressed a hope that when he brought forward his Motion on this subject, he (Lord J. Russell) would be prepared with more accurate information as to what the arrangements really were. In this respect he must repeat what he had before said—that having written to the Bishop of Durham, informing him that a question was about to be asked, but that it was at his option whether he desired to give any information or not; and having received from that right rev. Prelate a reply, stating that, though he did not think himself bound to make any statement of the precise nature of the arrangements made, yet that he was quite willing that what he had done should be explained to the House of Commons; and having explained that answer to the House, together with all the information which had been furnished, he should not think it right to go into any complicated questions as to any arrangements the Bishop of Durham might have made in respect to this rectory, nor should he think it necessary to inform himself further on the matter. Should the subject of such arrangements generally be brought before Parliament, he should be prepared to consider it; but he could not undertake to ascertain in any particular instance what particular arrangements might have been made.

Mr. HORSMAN inquired whether, in the noble Lord's opinion, the Bishop had any authority to divert any portion of the temporalities provided by law for the incumbent to any other purpose?

Lord J. RUSSELL did not consider that the Bishop would have any authority to divert the revenues settled by law as the income of the living, whether arising from rents or other sources; and if that had been done in any case, he imagined there would be some legal remedy.

Subject at an end.

AUSTRALIA—IRISH EMIGRATION.

Mr. MONSELL rose to put a question

to the Under Secretary for the Colonies. It had been distinctly understood—he used the very words of Mr. Merivale—that the Australian emigrants should be taken from each part of the United Kingdom in proportion to the population. But it now appeared, on the authority of Mrs. Chisholme, than in 1848 there were 13,993 emigrants from England, 2,739 from Scotland, and only 1,879 from Ireland, which included the orphans taken from the workhouses in Ireland. He wished to ask the hon. Under Secretary if this was correct; and, if so, how the conduct of the Colonial Office was to be reconciled with its professions?

MR. HAWES would state exactly the numbers that had been sent out during the years 1847 and 1848. From England there had been 15,676 emigrants sent out; from Scotland, 2,863; and from Ireland, 3,534; making a total of 22,074. According to the proportion of population, the numbers of Irish, according to this return, fell short by about 4,000; but, when it was considered that under the head of English emigrants going from England, a large number of Irish emigrants, superior emigrants, were included, he doubted if the disproportion would be found to be so great. He had no desire to alter the statements with respect to the proportion of emigrants, and he thought he had shown to the House that the disproportion which had taken place would not be very large, if the number of Irishmen who had gone out among the English emigrants could be ascertained.

MR. MONSELL begged attention to this fact, that 16,000 emigrants had gone out from England, and only 4,000 from Ireland; and he begged to ask, further, whether, among the papers sent to the different emigration agents, instructions had not been sent from the Colonial Office that they should not send Irishmen?

MR. HAWES begged the House to bear in mind that the Emigration Commissioners were entrusted entirely with colonial funds for colonial purposes. They were not British or imperial funds, and, therefore, the colonists had a distinct right to decide upon the character and quality of the emigration; and he believed they had given an opinion that they did prefer English to Irish emigrants.

MR. J. O'CONNELL asked whether, as a large proportion of the Irish emigrants consisted of young persons, any provision was made for their being educated, in the colony, in the religion of their parents?

MR. HAWES said it was true that a great number of Irish orphans had been sent out, and, in reference to the South Australian colony in particular, he could state that a Committee composed of Roman Catholics had been formed to superintend their settlement in the colony, and he took it for granted that their religious education would not be overlooked.

MR. CHISHOLM ANSTEY asked if it was not true that in the Australian colonies these unfortunate questions of Catholic and Protestant were rarely, if ever, heard of?

MR. HAWES could certainly not quite concur in that statement.

FINANCIAL REFORM.

On the Question that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,

MR. COBDEN rose and said: I have ventured, Sir, to introduce the Amendment which has been placed in your hands, because I thought it would be advantageous to the House and to the country that before we went into Committee of Supply, or into the details of the Estimates, we should have the opportunity of discussing the question of the financial condition and prospects of the country, and the cause which has given rise to the great increase in the public expenditure which has been going on during the last thirteen years; and I have considered that by doing so we shall afford the Government the opportunity of ascertaining the sense of the House, and I hope also the sense of the country, on this subject. In giving notice of this Motion as an Amendment to the Motion for going into Committee of Supply, I by no means wish hon. Gentlemen to infer that the plan I propose here, or have propounded elsewhere, is one that I expect the Government will bring forward in their estimates to-night or on Friday next. I have no such expectation, and should be sorry to take the division in such a shape as to leave any hon. Gentleman to infer, still less to argue, that what I propose to do can be done instanter. All I wish is that the House should have the opportunity of expressing its opinion as to the desirableness and the necessity of the great reduction in the expenditure which I advocate. Now, Sir, there is just one other point to which I will refer for a moment. I have stated in the beginning of my resolution that our net expenditure for the year 1835 amounted to 44,422,000*l.*, and that it was 54,185,000*l.* down to the commencement of the present year. I would have inserted the gross expenditure if I could have obtained it from the last accounts, because we are under a great delusion in this House and in the country in supposing that our expenditure amounts only to that which comes into the net account of our finances. Now, Sir, on this subject we can take a very much more severe view of our neighbours' affairs than we can of our own. We have had the finances of the French Government very much criticised and remarked upon in this country of late. Now, the French accounts are kept in a very different, and I think superior, way from ours. In the French accounts you have the gross sums put down on the debit and credit sides. For instance, the cost of collection, all the drawbacks, and everything which in this country is put down as charges of collection of revenue, you have put down in the gross revenue of accounts in France. Besides, in France you have a great number of items charged that we put down here as local expenditure. For instance, they have a large item for the religious instruction of the people; they have also items for roads and bridges, the whole of their education, and *ateliers nationaux*. We have heard a great deal of their cost of workshops, forgetting that we have our *ateliers nationaux* in every workhouse in England. I will just read to the House what is the amount of expenditure in England for public objects of the same kind as are inserted in the French budget. Our imperial expenditure is 54,000,000*l*.; and here I beg to say that I will only give the figures in round numbers, omitting the hundreds and thousands, and that in every case I will engage to be under the real amounts. Our imperial expenditure, then, is 54,000,000*l*. Our cost of collection and other amounts not paid into the Exchequer is 7,000,000*l*. Our expenditure for the relief the poor in the United Kingdom is 8,000,000*l*. Our county rates I put down at 1,000,000*l*.; our highway rates are 1,000,000*l*.; religion, 6,000,000*l*.—making a gross total altogether of 77,000,000*l*. Now, we have heard it stated in this country that the French Government, in the year of the revolution, and when they were in an exceptional state, had expended 72,000,000*l*. In this country we expended 77,000,000*l*. for similar objects. Nay more, I have left out our expense for hospitals and education, though I believe that if every item was included, and a fair comparison made, we should have an expenditure of 80,000,000*l*. in England against 72,000,000*l*. in France, for a population of 29,000,000 against a population of 36,000,000. Now, Sir, that I think is calculated to make us enter on the consideration of this question in a mode calculated, if possible, to diminish this enormous amount of expenditure; and in bringing forward these local charges, I must say that we have lost sight, a great deal too much, of the increase of late years which has taken place in the local taxation of this country—for this country differs from every other in this respect, that we have four or five different local and legislative bodies taxing the people in different ways for a variety of objects. If we look at the increase in our local expenditure, we shall see something deserving of our serious and solemn attention. I will take the amount for the relief and maintenance of the poor in the United Kingdom. In the year 1837 that amount was 4,300,000*l*.; by the latest accounts it was 8,341,000*l*.; and I take 1837 as the first starting point, because, in that year, the new poor-law was brought into full operation in this country, and we had effected a considerable reduction in the expenditure for the relief of the poor, and thought that the new law would have prevented any increase. Why, in England alone, since that time, the increase has been 50 per cent for the relief of the poor. In county rates it has been the same. For the year 1835 the county rates amounted to 671,000*l*. For the year ending Michaelmas 1847 they were 1,266,000*l*. — nearly double again for county rates since 1835. And I must say that I think local charges of this kind form a much truer index of the state of the country than the imperial taxation, for bear in mind that these items of poor-rates and county rates are for the support of pauperism, the construction and maintenance of gaols, and other objects of that kind. In fact, your local taxation is a kind of barometer, showing the social state of the country; and I must say that the progress of these rates for the last fourteen or fifteen years has been of a most discouraging and alarming kind. And there is another view of this question. You cannot diminish these local rates, you cannot keep them down, or prevent their increase, by any means you may resort to in the localities themselves. It is my firm belief that the progress of extravagance in your Imperial Legislature is the cause of the growth of pauperism and crime in your several localities, and that to amend and check this you must apply the remedy in this House by general legislation. Now, Sir, I think these facts will prepare us all for entering into this subject with a desire, if possible, to find a means of reducing the expenditure which leads to these evils. And now I come to the point upon which I have heard much cavilling, and which I do not wish to be an obstacle in the way of any hon. Gentleman joining with me this evening. It has been objected to me and asked, "Why do you take 1835 as the standard to judge by in making your calculations?" Why, I have taken it because I would avoid doing that, which indeed I have been charged with doing, I would avoid taking an arbitrary standard. I have been charged with being dogmatical and fanciful in taking an arbitrary standard. I have done as we all would do in the management of our private affairs. If we have done wrong, we would look back and see when we began to get wrong. And in doing this, I have only followed precedents set me by others who discussed similar quessions before. Why, I appeal to the hon. Member for Montrose, and other hon. Members of this House, whether, after the French revolutionary war, it was not the practice here to refer to the standard of 1792? [Mr. HUME: Whig and Tory did so.] Whig and Tory, my hon. Friend reminds me, pointed back to 1792 as the point at which they fell into these unhappy hostilities. I believe it was the practice of Mr. Pitt to refer back to the peace establishment after the seven years' war. Even the Finance Committee of 1817, appointed by Lord Castlereagh—even they referred to 1792 as the standard, as the point of departure to which they should endeavour to return. Why, I could quote from every leading man, who sat on the Opposition side of the House in 1816, down to 1822, arguments to show the propriety of the course I am pursuing. I will take one. I will quote from the Marquess of Lansdowne, who moved a resolution analogous to mine in March, 1816, and said, upon that occasion—

> "With this view it would be necessary for him to compare the present with former estimates; and, indeed, this was the only practicable way in which they could be considered, drawing in aid of that consideration the experience and wisdom of former times. That this had been the practice upon former occasions was proved by the conduct of a right hon. Gentleman, whose authority the noble Lords opposite could scarcely dispute, he meant Mr. Pitt, who, in 1786, had a Committee appointed for the purpose of considering what would be the proper estimates for the then peace establishment, taking as a ground for their decision the estimates at the peace of 1763; thus showing, that the comparison with former estimates, and the experience of former times, formed the only practical grounds on which questions of this nature could be determined."

Now, Sir, I hope I may not be considered as unjustified by precedent. I am not one of those who attach an undue importance to precedent; but I think the case I have referred to forms a good example for me in drawing attention to the expenditure of 1835. And when I say 1835, I might take the average of '34, '35, and '36, because it would make very little difference in the calculation; but I take 1835, and draw a comparison between that and the expenditure of last year. I find that the interest of the funded and unfunded debt in 1835 was 28,514,000*l.*, that in 1848 it was 28,563,000*l.*, so that there is not a difference of 50,000*l.* between the interest on the debt then and at the present time. Then I find that the expenditure for the Army, Navy, and Ordnance in 1835 was 11,657,000*l.*, that in 1848 it was 17,645,000*l.*, and that the Kaffir war in 1848—for I cannot separate that from our warlike estimates, because I know not when it may commence again—cost 1,100,000*l.*, making a total for Army, Navy, and Ordnance, of 18,745,000*l.* for last year. The civil expenditure, Consolidated Fund, and miscellaneous for 1835 was 4,251,000*l.*; for 1848, it was 6,598,000*l.*; and the distress in Ireland last year cost 276,000*l.* The total, therefore, of expenditure in 1835 was 44,422,000*l.* against 54,182,000*l.* in 1848. Now I wish every hon. Member to look at this point. You have 28,563,000*l.* for the interest of the funded and unfunded debt, which you cannot touch for any reduction of your expenditure. Then, for civil expenditure, you have 6,598,000*l.* Well, upon nearly the half of that which goes to the Consolidated Fund you might probably, and you will in time, I hope, be able to make considerable reductions; but that sum, which is voted under permanent Acts of Parliament, is, I believe, the last to which you will apply for any reduction of expenditure. Well, then, Sir, we come to a sum of 3,000,000*l.* or 4,000,000*l.* a year for your miscellaneous expenditure, upon which you are to exercise the pruning knife, unless you adopt the plan which I most unfeignedly recommend, to reduce that enormous item of 18,000,000*l.*, for your military establishment. Now, I have always advocated, feeling the necessity of a reduction of expenditure, the going to that item where great practical relief can be had. Hon. Gentlemen connected with the military service may think that there is a spirit of hostility in my mind to them, because I touch that item. I do it from absolute necessity. If you will give any substantial relief to the country, and make such a reduction as will amount to a sensible diminution of expenditure, you must apply to that great expenditure upon Army, Navy, and Ordnance. Now, Sir, I will endeavour—for that is the gist of the argument I have to offer upon the Army, Navy, and Ordnance—I will endeavour, with your permission, to show what has been the expenditure upon that since 1835, what were the causes of the increase, and I will then leave it to the House to decide whether those causes which led to the increase exist at present. Now, in 1836, there was an additional vote of 5,000 seamen to the Navy. I am speaking to hon. Gentlemen who will remember every thing that passed in this country since that time, and therefore I will not go into details. I will simply remind you, that in 1836 there was a great apprehension felt in this country respecting the Russian invasion. We had two or three gentlemen then in England who, I thought, had a monomania on the subject. I was so struck with that impression, that, although occupied at that time in private pursuits, I did perpetrate two or three pamphlets in answer to those gentlemen, who, as I said before, had, as I thought, a monomania about Russia. But the cry was propagated by those individuals, and echoed in the press, and in this House, and the result was, that the hon. Member for Halifax proposed the increase of 5,000 men for the Navy. The King's Speech recommended it; and it is no secret in the present day that the King had a strong feeling on the subject. Well, is there any ground now for supposing that Russia is coming to invade us? Why, we were to have had the French invasion since that; but who will now say that we want these 5,000 seamen to protect us? Still there they remain. Now I come to 1838. You remember the rebellion in Canada in 1838. That gave rise to an increase of 8,000 to our Army. That rebellion was put an end to very soon. Canada, since then, obtained every thing a country can desire in the shape of self-government. I can only say that I wish the people here were in as happy a position as the population of Canada are. I suppose hon. Gentlemen will not imagine that there is any danger now of a rebellion or of any collision between England and Canada, yet there the 8,000 soldiers still remain. Now, in 1839, the right hon. Member for the city of London (Lord J. Russell), who was then Home Secretary, moved for an increase of 5,000 men rank and file for the Army, and he told us what they were wanted for. There had been an insurrection at Newport: I allude to the affair of Frost, Williams, and Jones. There was some turbulence in that part of the country by the Chartist party, and the noble Lord told us that 5,000 men were required to meet those domestic troubles. Well, but we have had an interval of several years of uninterrupted peace at home, during which the Chartists have been scarcely heard of, and yet there remain these 5,000 men. We never heard of their reduction. Now I come to the year 1840 and 1841. We had the China war, a war in Syria—we had a threatened rupture with France, and we were embroiled with America with respect to the arrest and trial of M'Leod. These were times of excitement, and I admit they were not without some peril to the peace of the country, and there was an addition of 5,000 sailors made at that time. Well, but the China war is at an end. Syria is in the hands of the Turks. There is no longer a threatened rupture with France or with America, and the M'Leod matter has been settled. Yet, here are the 5,000 sailors—we never had them recalled. Well, I come now to 1842. We had a dispute then with the United States about the Maine boundary—in fact, the irritation between England and America was caused by the burning of the *Caroline*, when the Maine boundary question was agitated, and then there was considerable excitement in America, and some excitement here. Four thousand sailors were added to our marine; but Lord Ashburton came back with an amicable treaty settling the whole dispute about the boundary. Yet we had no reduction of these sailors. Well, then, comes 1845. That was a serious state of things. We had a dispute with the United States respecting the Oregon boundary. President Polk sent over a warlike message. General Cass made some furious and indiscreet speeches, and there was a feeling that we were in imminent danger of a collision on that boundary question. America declared that she would take possession of the territory, and administer her laws there, and we said we would not submit to have Oregon taken from us. Well, there was a proposal to increase our Navy, and establish a fleet of evolution. We accordingly had a fleet at Spithead, and Her Majesty went there to see it, and I recollect it was stated in the papers at the time to be more formidable than the fleet that gained the battles of Trafalgar and the Nile. Well, in that year we had an increase of 1,700,000*l.* in the Army, Navy, and Ordnance Departments; and my hon. Friend the Member for Montrose gave a willing assent to that increase under the circumstances then detailed. Well, but the Oregon question was settled in the summer of 1846. I believe its settlement was the last act performed by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth before he went out of office in 1846. Where, then, is the plea for keeping up that enormous armament? But, in 1846, no sooner was the Oregon question settled, than we entered into diplomatic quarrels with France respecting the Spanish marriages. I call it a diplomatic quarrel, though I might call it a Court quarrel —for the people of this country had no interest in it. But it gave rise to bad blood in France, and to a state of irritation in this country, and the press of the two countries fanned the flame, and no one could deny that there was a great alienation, if not hostility, between the two countries. That was increased by the previous publication of Prince Joinville's pamphlet, and also by the old grudge in the case of Mr. Pritchard. This produced a bad spirit between us and France, and, accordingly, we increased our "armaments" that year by 1,200,000*l.* In 1847 the same spirit continued between the two countries, until we had discussions about fortifying our coast against an attack from France; and at the end of '47 we had a panic among us, and we were then persuaded by Mr. Pigou, the gunpowder maker, that the French were actually coming to attack us. We had another increase of Army and Ordnance in '47 to the amount of 1,000,000*l.* The actual increase for Army, Navy, and Ordnance in '47 was, I believe, 1,600,000*l.*, but whether exception be taken to some of the items I know not. I ask the House whether there is one of the causes which led to these successive augmentations of our Marine, Army, and Ordnance that now remains? The last of which I have spoken, I think, might have been the most serious of all, though, as I stated, it was only a diplomatic quarrel; but as it became dynastic, and as the second generation, in the person of Prince Joinville, had entered into it, it might have grown into something serious between the two countries, if the question had not been solved by a very rude hand—the late revolution in France, which has put an end to all possibility of quarrelling between us and France on the subject of the marriages in Spain. For, whatever other grounds of danger and apprehension may remain, no one need apprehend that France and England will quarrel about the successor to the Spanish Crown. Well, I ask hon. Members who are going to oppose me—those who will not admit that we may return as speedily as practicable to a standard such as we had in 1835 and 1836—to put their finger on any of the causes for those successive augmentations of our expenditure, and tell me one that now remains. Why, Sir, we stand at the present moment in infinitely a superior position as compared with our foreign relations to what we did in '35; for, in '35, when we had reduced our expenditure to that point, hon. Gentlemen will remember that we were not in a very friendly position with Russia. For several years we had no Ambassador at St. Petersburg. We were marauding, too, on the coast of Spain, for we had our Quadruple Treaty, by which we furnished mercenaries under our foreign marine. We were, then, in 1835, not in so secure a state with our foreign relations as we are now. I ask any one to point out where the danger is now threatened. Is it with America, and on account of those boundary questions which we were assured were to germinate a war for a quarter of a century? Is it with France? Is it with Russia? who is conscious that, with her 20,000,000 of serfs, she has quite as much to do at home as any other country. I say that if England takes due advantage of her insular position, and confines herself to her own affairs, and does not run into needless and rash disputes with other countries, there never was a time when she stood so free from danger of war as at the present moment. Our present political state, as regards our foreign relations, might be said to be as calm as still water. It may be objected, when asked to go back to the standard of 1835, that the expenditure of that year was too low. I do not admit that, my hon. Friend the Member for Montrose will not admit it. It has been said that the services were left in an inefficient state in 1835. My hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield said on a former occasion that the dockyards had been left in a state of destitution. My hon. Friend ought to have remembered that that was said once before. In 1816, when the noble Lord the Member for London, and all his leading Whig Colleagues, were advocating a reduction of the naval and military establishments to the standard of 1792, it was said that the standard was injudiciously low, and that Mr. Pitt had ever after regretted he had made it so low. This was repeated by Lord Castlereagh and others, *ad nauseam,* until Lord Granville denied that Mr. Pitt entertained such an opinion, and that he, on the contrary, always congratulated himself that he had reduced those establishments so low after the American war, because it enabled this country to come into war with France with recruited forces. For the reduction of 1835 we are mainly indebted to a right hon. Gentleman (Sir J. Graham), for whose administrative talents I entertain the greatest respect and admiration; and I call upon him to say whether the dockyards were left by him in the state of destitution described by the hon. Member for Sheffield? Turning from our foreign relations, I feel myself bound to advert to a question which is always presented to us in discussions of this nature. Let any hon. Member ask for a reduction of establishments, and he is immediately told that they are necessary for the maintenance of our colonies. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth, in his celebrated budget speech of Feb. 14, 1845, said—

> "Of the 112 battalions of infantry in the British service, there now 23 in India, 50 are serving in the colonies, and 4 are on their passage, making in all 77 battalions actually employed in the defence of our colonial empire. We have 35 battalions at home—not, as it is supposed, for the purpose of restraining the population, but for the purpose, and we effect it incompletely, of maintaining the system of reliefs for our regiments serving abroad."

Now, I ask the House if the time is not come when we ought seriously to consider whether we cannot reduce the enormous expenditure incurred by this country for colonial possessions? That question was suggested by a Committee of the House in 1832; but how much more necessary is it to consider it now. What the ground is upon which free-traders can possibly advocate the keeping up of that enormous expense, I am at a loss to discover. I can understand Gentlemen who are protectionists, upon the principle that our exclusive trade with the colonies remunerates us for the expense of colonial establishments; I can understand them voting for these establishments, so long as they had a hope of keeping up the principle of protection. But if there be protectionists who think that the old protection principle can be restored, I am willing that they should vote against me on this occasion. If, on the other hand, there be free-traders who think that free trade is only an experiment, I am willing that they too should take a similar course. But I ask how they who think, with me, that free trade is not an experiment, but a permanent rule and principle, can any longer vote for the maintenance of these establishments in our colonies? According to our theory of free trade, we consider that we give the colonies a great boon in allowing them to trade where they please. We have got that liberty for ourselves, and by giving it to them we remove a great obstacle to their prosperity. But, we say they are bound to maintain for themselves those establishments which are necessary for their own defence and their own government. I hear some Gentlemen say that we must make them an integral part of the kingdom. But if we do, will they pay our taxes and share our debt? If that is done, I can understand the principle of doing so; but otherwise, the proposition passes my comprehension. The great mass of the people of this country can derive no benefit from our colonies unless through the medium of trade. It is only a very few who benefit by sinecures and appointments. Such being the case, I say it is manifestly unjust and indefensible, that you should tax the people of this country for the expenses of our colonies. There was a great difference between some places, such as Gibraltar and Malta, in which we must maintain a garrison, and colonies such as Australia, New Zealand, and the Cape of Good Hope, which are inhabited by an English race, which are placed in a temperate zone, and where Englishmen can become indigenous. I say it is monstrous that the people of England should be taxed for maintaining the establishments of these colonies. I wish that hon. Members would just reflect a little upon the comparative condition of the inhabitants of these colonies and the people of this country; for if they did they would find that the former were in an enviable state compared with the latter; and that a labourer in Australia is upon a par with a small Devonshire farmer. In a letter recently received from the wife of a Northampton emigrant in Australia, the writer states—

> "Plenty of money, plenty of victuals. The only thing that grieves us now is to think of your starving in England, and we in a land of such great plenty. I wish you would all make up your minds and come. I am sure you would never repent coming here; for there is plenty of work, and plenty of money, and plenty of victuals. We never eat less than a quarter of mutton a week for us three, and beautiful meat it is here."

If hon. Gentlemen consider that I am speaking logically and fairly, and deducing from the principles of free trade, they will go with me to this extent at all events, that we must from this time prepare to relieve ourselves as speedily as possible from the expenditure we have incurred on account of our military establishments in our colonies. In New Zealand you have 2,000 rank and file, and not 20,000 European inhabitants—that is, about one soldier for every ten colonists—that one soldier having been carried from England, at the expense of the people of the country, a distance of 12,000 or 15,000 miles, to be fed and clothed in the midst of a people every one of whom carries his own rifle, and knows how to use it. In Australia, where there are no aboriginal inhabitants, and not even a beast of prey to injure the colonists, I do say it is bad policy and gross injustice to compel us to pay for a military establishment which the colonists themselves would prefer being without, provided you give them the control of their own affairs. I do believe that much of this force is kept up to enable our Colonial Office to administer its affairs in the way it does—that it is kept up more to enable the Government to keep down the population, than to protect that population against an enemy. I consider that free trade has enabled you to reduce your expenditure to a less point than 1835, and yet leave you all the necessary force you may require for protection at home. It has been shown that only one-third of our troops are permanently employed in this country, while two-thirds are maintained for the colonies. That is a system which requires a total change, and if you do change it you can no longer have any difficulty in making the reduction I call for. I am aware that respecting armaments at home, you have now a much larger force in England and Ireland than in 1835. I am very sorry it is so; and I think there has prevailed a most exaggerated idea as to the necessity of that force. Last year we were all in a panic, and could not reason on the subject. But we have no longer that excuse, while the trials in the courts of law in reference to the disturbances that did take place have thrown much light upon what has been unworthily dignified by the name of insurrection. It has been clearly shown that neither in England nor Ireland have there been 100 men confederated together with arms to war against the Crown and Government of this country. I believe that that comedy of a revolution was never sustained by meetings of more than 30 men, and of these six or eight were spies. I believe, moreover, if what I have heard from magistrates and others be true, that whatever of revolutionary feeling there was in the disturbance here, came from Hibernian inspiration—that if it had not been for the Irish elements there would have been no turbulence amongst the English population. Besides, it should be recollected in justice to this country and to the mass of the working people, that for eighteen months previous to the outbreak of the French revolution, they had passed through a crisis of great difficulty, privation, and suffering. This pressure of 1847 was felt particularly in the counties of York and Lancaster, and yet not the slightest tendency to turbulence or political excitement of any kind was evinced. The people believed in their conscience that every ounce of food that could find its way to this country was admitted into it—they knew that the navigation laws were suspended, and they felt that the Government had not placed itself in antagonism to them; and with this conviction on their mind they abstained from all acts of hostility towards the Government, and evinced those of perfect loyalty and order. Notwithstanding this, attempts, which, I own, have filled me with feelings of surprise, not unmixed with indignation, have been made to prove that it has been our troops, and our artillery, and the hundreds of thousands of special constables alone, who prevented a large portion of the people of this country from rising into rebellion. I don't believe it, and I am happy to think I have no reason to believe it; for if it were true it would be very unfortunate for the country. There is another point I feel bound to notice, in justice to the people of this country, and in mercy to those deluded men who are now expiating their crimes, or follies, or both. I hope that at some future time it will be considered, particularly in reference to the case of the young men, that when they erred, this country was exposed to the influence of an electric shock which had been felt all through Europe, and that it was not an unnatural thing that men with vivid fancies, or sanguine temperaments, or who felt keenly for the sufferings of the people, should have been seized with the idea of revolutionising the country. You had every reason to expect some attempt of the kind, and you have now reason to congratulate yourselves that after a short interval you should find so little trace of it. But the conclusion I draw from all this is, that you cannot at the present moment take the condition of the people as a justification for keeping up a larger military force in England than usual. On the ground, therefore, of our foreign relations, on the ground of our colonial connexions, and with reference to our domestic relations, I see no reason whatever to prevent the Executive Government from being authorised by this House, as an act of justice and mercy to the taxpayers of the nation, largely to reduce our naval and military forces. It is not my intention to tell you on this occasion what I would do with the money saved, or how you might relieve the commercial and agricultural industry of the country by a large remission of taxation. I will not anticipate the opportunities which hon. Gentlemen opposite will give me of proving to them that if they wish to abolish the malt tax and the hop duties, it must and can only be effected by their voting for some such measure as I propose. I am prepared to remove every obstacle I can to the full use and development of labour and capital, whether in agriculture or manufactures. But I tell hon. Gentlemen that it is useless to go to agricultural meetings, and talk of repealing the malt tax and the hop duties, unless they look at the arithmetical table which I have placed before them, and see whether I am not right in saying that it is only by largely reducing our naval and military establishments that they can effect any large reduction of taxation; without which their scheme of abolishing those taxes which are alleged to be an obstacle in the way of the agriculturist, cannot possibly be carried out. There are other taxes as well which claim consideration. There is the tax upon timber, which the Government, I doubt not, desire to make a corollary to the removal of the navigation laws. There are also bricks, and soap, and paper, and tea. I hear Gentlemen to the right and left whispering some favourite tax for repeal. You will have those doors besieged by petitioners anxious for the removal of those taxes. It is not necessary that I should now dwell upon the necessity of removing them—ample opportunity will be afforded me on future occasions; and I shall only say, looking to the growing demand for a reduction of taxation, that if you are determined to maintain these enormous establishments, you are incurring far greater risks to this country, than by reducing them you have any reason to apprehend from the chance of collision with foreign Powers. I never look at the question without considering what is the danger of reducing our forces, and what the danger if we continue the present enormous amount of taxation. If the Government of this country derived its funds from some source independent of taxation, I dare say it would never become the subject of controversy between me and hon. Gentlemen opposite how the money was spent. But when it comes out of the pockets of the people, and chiefly from the labouring classes, and is levied by imposts which obstruct the channels of trade and agriculture, it becomes a matter for serious consideration whether it would not be better even to run a little risk from abroad, and relieve the country, than oppress the people and injure the country for the sake of being prepared when the danger did come. I have already shown that the increase in our establishments has taken place to meet particular cases and alleged necessities which no longer exist. It is said now, that they cannot be reduced, because other countries have increased their establishments, and that we must not reduce, because they do not. I am strongly of opinion, that respecting the Navy we are the offenders, by being the first to increase, and by still increasing. Looking to the tendencies of opinion in France, there is now a decidedly pacific feeling amongst the people of that country; and I believe that any overture made by this House, or the country, for a reduction of armaments, would be freely met and responded to by them. It is acknowledged by them, that their finances form the great danger and difficulty of the new republic; and that the only means of meeting it is by a large reduction of their warlike establishments. But I would apply the pruning knife to our civil establishments as well, and have included in the list of our tariff the amount for civil expenditure which I think may justly be taken off. I would apply it also to the civil expenditure of the country; the sum is smaller certainly, but a great deal too exorbitant. But, be it remembered, it is not only the net amount of the revenue, that which finds its way into the Consolidated Fund, that we have to make our economy from—there is a large amount which never comes into the account at all, which goes in disbursements, and in the cost of collection; and if you can diminish that amount, in the same proportion you increase the amount of money which does reach the Exchequer. Though you have but three or four millions in the civil expenditure to which you can apply the pruning knife, yet you may make a considerable reduction there. In one item alone you may effect a considerable saving, that on which the noble Lord (Viscount Duncan) the Member for Bath obtained a Committee last year, the Woods and Forests. Last year, when that noble Lord made a most eloquent appeal to this House for the removal of the window duty, he told us that he should go into that Committee (on the Woods and Forests) to save 600,000*l*. a year. Well, if he saves only one-half of that sum, it will go a great way towards enabling the Chancellor of the Exchequer to reduce our civil expenditure by a million and a half. For I take it that the Consolidated Fund is continually throwing up the means, from time to time, of suppressing unnecessary offices, and reducing others. At all events, I think it will not be difficult to reduce the expenditure to what it was in 1835. I can only say, if it were left to me to do it, I would do it in this way: I would spend not more than ten millions for our armaments; I would have them as efficient as they could be, but they should not cost more than ten millions. I would have the remainder for the civil expenditure; I would have 1,600,000*l*. more for that, as there would be 1,600,000*l*. less for the military and naval expenditure. Thus preserving the total amount as it was in 1835; but giving one and a half million more to the civil expenditure, and taking it from the military and naval expenditure, you may, I am confident, return to the expenditure of 1835. And I venture to predict, having had some previous experience in watching the development of public opinion, that nothing less will satisfy the people of this country. The feeling in favour of economy has grown much within the last year. This House itself bears witness of it. I have seen such evidence of the progress of opinion on this subject, that I have not the least doubt, in a comparatively short time, the expenditure of this country may be brought back to the expenditure of 1835. I will conclude by merely saying, that I consider, in advocating the reduction of expenditure, I am advocating the removal of those impediments to industry which cause disease, pauperism, and crime in the country; a measure which will tend to make the people contented and happy citizens, instead of being miserable, dejected, and disaffected—in giving men something to fight for in this country, something to preserve, and to love, instead of making them the enemies of our institutions. Every step that you take in that way, in mitigating the pressure of taxation on the people, and showing that a government of this kind may be carried on as cheaply as the governments in other countries, will do more to preserve your institutions; aye, and will do more to preserve yourselves from foreign attacks than any amount which you can expend in military and naval preparations. Sir, I have now to move the following resolution:—

"To leave out from the word 'That' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, 'the net expenditure of the Government for the year 1835 (Parliamentary Paper, No. 260, 1847), amounted to 44,422,000*l*.; that the net expenditure for the year ended 5th January, 1849 (Parliamentary Paper, No. 1, 1849), amounted to 54,185,000*l*.; the increase of nearly ten millions having been caused principally by successive augmentations of our warlike establishments, and outlays for defensive armaments:

"That no foreign danger, nor necessary cost of the Civil Government, nor indispensable disbursements for the services in our dependencies abroad, warrant the continuance of this increase of expenditure:

"That the Taxes required to meet the present expenditure, impede the operations of agriculture and manufactures, and diminish the funds for the employment of labour in all branches of productive industry, thereby increasing pauperism and crime, and adding grievously to the local and general burthens of the people:

"That, to diminish these evils, it is expedient that this House take steps to reduce the annual expenditure, with all practicable speed, to an amount not exceeding the sum which, within the last fourteen years, has been proved to be sufficient for the maintenance of the security, honour, and dignity of the nation."

Mr. HUME seconded the Motion.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER, although differing from his hon. Friend who had brought forward this resolution, must express his satisfaction at the fair and temperate manner in which he had introduced the subject. On former occasions the hon. Gentleman had stated, that he intended to make no charge against either the present or any past Government; and certainly his speech that night was in perfect consistency with that spirit and temper. In answering the hon. Gentleman, he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) did not, therefore, feel that he was called upon to defend himself or any Member of the Government from imputation or attack. The hon. Gentleman had truly stated, that several increases in the estimates had been made, with the general concurrence of this and preceding Parliaments; and he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) would only so far draw an argument from this circumstance as to infer that measures in which so many large majorities of that House had concurred, could hardly be so very far wrong as the hon. Gentleman seemed to suppose. He could assure him that he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) was not disposed to take any exception to any of the minor points to which he had referred. He differed with him, not in the matter of a few hundreds or thousands, but upon millions, and he therefore wished to meet his arguments in general terms and in the fairest spirit. The hon. Gentleman had made allusion to the local taxation of the country; but he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) must confess that he did not see the connexion that subject had with the conclusions to which the hon. Gentleman had come. He thought the hon. Gentleman would find that the general increase in the county rates, and other local taxation of that description, had arisen from the improvements introduced in recent years in the prison discipline of the country, the adoption of better means for carrying out secondary punishments, and the provision of comfortable asylums for destitute and miserable lunatics throughout the country. In fact, the general increase of local taxation was owing to the general improvement of the local administration of the country. He would now, after this passing remark, address himself to answering the main argument of the hon. Gentleman. He should not object to a reference to the expenditure of a former year, as the hon. Member for Montrose used to refer, in former years, to that of the year 1792. But when any particular year was fixed upon as a standard to which they were imperatively bound to go back, the hon. Gentleman would surely admit that these two conditions were necessary — first, that the year which he took for his standard must be one when there was an adequate provision made for the efficiency of the public services; and, second, that no subsequent changes had taken place in the state and condition of the country. Neither of these conditions were fulfilled in the proposition of the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Gentleman had stated, in round terms, that, by returning to the standard of 1835 in our naval and military expenditure, a reduction of ten millions could easily be effected. It was right in the first place that the accurate figures should be placed before the House. The hon. Gentleman had stated truly that the expenditure for the year 1848 was 54,185,000*l.*, and that the expenditure for the year 1835 amounted only to 44,422,000*l.*, the difference between the two years being a little short of ten millions. But the whole of that increase was not to be attributed to an increase in the naval and military establishments of the country. The hon. Gentleman had erroneously included in the expenditure of last year what he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) must consider an extraordinary item, namely, the cost of the Kaffir war, which was an unforeseen and uncontrollable expenditure, and had been incurred almost before it was known that the necessity for it existed. This, together with the 276,000*l.* voted for the relief of Irish distress, as they could not be viewed as permanent causes of expense, must both be deducted from the hon. Gentleman's calculation of the expenditure of last year. The hon. Gentleman had also referred, but in milder terms, to the increase in the expenditure for civil purposes since 1835. There had been a very large increase under that head since the year 1835. The difference between the two periods in the civil expenditure of the country for various purposes, including an increase of 700,000*l.* charged on the Consolidated Fund, principally for judicial establishments and Irish constabulary, amounted to 2,372,000*l.*, and if this sum, with the 1,376,000*l.* for the Kaffir war and Irish distress, were deducted from the apparent increase in the general expenditure, the increase upon the naval and military expenditure since 1835 would be reduced to 6,000,000*l.* in round numbers, instead of 10,000,000*l.* Therefore, if the hon. Gentleman succeeded in his favourite notion of returning to the expenditure of 1835, for naval and military purposes, he could only effect a reduction of 6,000,000*l.*, instead of 10,000,000*l.* If the hon. Gentleman only meant to say that the Government ought to carry into effect every practicable economy, he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) did not differ from him; and he hoped, before he sat down, to convince the House that the Government had not been unmindful of the pledge given by them to the House last year—to effect every reduction in the expenditure that was consistent with what they believed in the present year to be necessary for the best interests of the country. The hon. Gentleman did not, of course, mean that the expenditure was to be reduced to the extent to which he had alluded at some distant or indefinite period—in those halcyon days when all internal disputes would be settled in a high court of arbitration, and when every sword should be turned into a ploughshare, and every spear into a pruning hook. He was a practical man, and of course he meant by his Motion, that all this large reduction was to be carried out in a short period of time. The position upon which he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) would take his stand was this—and he hoped the House would express its deliberate opinion upon it—that it was not possible, in the course of a year or two, to effect a reduction to the extent proposed by the hon. Gentleman, with a due regard to that protection of life and property at home, and of our trade and commerce abroad, which he believed to be necessary for the full development of the industry and enterprise, agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial, of a great empire like this. He would commence by referring to the expenditure of the year 1835, and he believed that experience had shown that the provision made for the public service in that year was inadequate. In that year he had filled the office of Secretary to the Admiralty, and had to bring forward the naval estimates. For the four years during which he then held that situation, he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) was year after year exposed to attacks, not for any extravagance or for any undue increase in the estimates for that department, but, on the contrary, the blame he received was for a parsimonious disregard of the best interests of the country. In the year 1835 we had not a single line-of-battle ship in any of our ports; but the necessity for some such force has been more strongly insisted upon than any other measure, in every discussion which has taken place on our national defences. The hon. Gentleman was mistaken as to the fear of Russian armaments being the cause of increase in 1836. The ground given for the increase in the number of men in the following year was the demands continually coming from almost every station that he could remember for increased protection to British subjects trading abroad; and it was not until 1838 or 1839 that the hon. Member for Birmingham and the hon. Member for West Kent dilated in the House upon the danger to which the coast of England was exposed from the possible ravages of the Russians. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cobden) had gone through the various causes that had led to successive increases in the naval force of the country, and had said that every one of those increases had been permanently maintained. But when he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) heard his hon. Friend's condemnation of all those causes that had led to these augmentations of our national strength, he must say he thought the hon. Gentleman himself had made a very strong case to show that almost every year since 1835, a larger force than existed in 1835 was necessary for the safety and security of the country. What with the threatened irruptions of the Russians in one year, the alarming state of Canada in another, the Chinese war in another, the Oregon disputes in another, the danger of a rupture with France with regard to the Tahitian affair in another, and various other causes, which the hon. Gentleman had cited as having led to the increase of our forces, the hon. Gentleman had himself convincingly shown the necessity for a larger force than the force of 1835, in almost every year since that period, for the due protection of our trade and commerce abroad, and for the security of our shores at home. In 1841 the naval force comprised 43,000 men; and the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth (Sir R. Peel), who had always shown the greatest anxiety for reducing the force when it could safely be done, had reduced the number to 36,000 men in 1844. But one short year's experience taught the right hon. Baronet that he had reduced the number to too low a point to be permanently maintained; and in the very able statement that had been referred to by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cobden), and which deserved to be regarded as a text-book of all financial statements, the right hon. Baronet in the year following the year in which he had made the reduction, namely, in 1845, laid it down not as a necessity arising from any extraordinary state of things in that year, but upon ordinary and permanent grounds, that the number of 1844 was not adequate for the due protection of the interests of the country, and he then increased the force to the number that stood upon the estimate for the present year, namely, 40,000 men. And even this number was evidently not considered enough in the next year by the right hon. Baronet, because when the present Government came into office in 1846, they found the number of men employed considerably above the number voted; and on the 1st January 1847, the excess was more than 4,000 men, so that there were upwards of 44,000 men employed in the Navy. The present Government had raised the vote in subsequent estimates in order to sanction the numbers borne; but in the course of last year a reduction of nearly 4,000 men had been made. The reduction proposed this year was 3,000 on the numbers voted; but the total reduction of men borne from the period when the number was the highest would be about 5,500, and they would stand for this year at 40,000, which was the number voted in 1845. Now what were the grounds for the increase beyond the standard of 1835? In that year the large field for the employment of our naval force in the eastern hemisphere did not exist. The trade with China was at that time mainly conducted by the East India Company. Now, however, we had to maintain a naval force at five separate ports in China, to protect our trade with that part of the globe. New Zealand, too, had been added to our colonial possessions; and, so far from agreeing with the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cobden) in thinking that free trade was an answer to all demands for protection to our colonies, it seemed to him (the Chancellor of the Exchequer), that the more our commerce was extended abroad—the more numerous the points occupied by British industry became—the more the demand must be met for protection to British subjects, in whatever part of the world they were placed, by a military and naval force. The same argument, of course, applied in this respect to the increase of the military as of the naval force. It was not for keeping down the population of Canada (who had truly been described by the hon. Gentlemen as about the most contented people on the face of the earth—and herein lay an answer to the frequent charges made of the misgovernment of that colony by his noble Friend the Secretary for the Colonies — it was not for keeping the people of Canada or the people of New Zealand down, that these forces were required, but for their protection more especially with respect to the latter colony) from the warlike attacks made against them, and not repelled without some difficulty, within the last few years. And when these colonies constituted such rich and ample fields for the settlement of our surplus population, as the hon. Gentleman had described that night, it seemed to him (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) that it was money not ill laid out to extend the protecting arm of the mother country over British industry and enterprise, so as to enable these colonies to become the great sources of supply for our raw material, and great sources of demand for our manufactures. It was necessary to remark also, that since 1835 a vast increase had taken place in our steam navy. In 1835 we possessed not more than two or three steam vessels. In that year no steamer had crossed the Atlantic, and an elaborate paper was written to demonstrate the impossibility of such an event. Since that period the application of steam to the purposes of the Royal Navy had been carried to a very large extent, and had now reached a point beyond which it was not necessary to advance. The increase of the steam navy rendered necessary an increased charge for stores, and also for buildings connected with the repairs of steam vessels and steam machinery. With regard to stores also, it had been necessary to increase the vote for the supplies of other articles. The votes for stores in the years referred to by the hon. Gentleman were unusually low, and this rendered necessary a large expenditure in subsequent years. Upon this point he requested the attention of the House to the following passage in the report of the Select Committee on the Army, Navy, and Ordnance Estimates:—

> "The vote for stores differs essentially from the other votes, inasmuch as it is not an estimate to provide for the consumption of the ensuing year, but has reference to a more distant period of time. The effects of an undue reduction in this vote are not, therefore, perceptible until some years after the time when the insufficient estimate may have been proposed. In such a case it is obvious that the apparent economy in this vote is only a postponement of purchases necessary for the maintenance of the Navy, and, in fact, relieves the estimates of one year by casting the burden on the votes of a future Session."

It was, therefore, obvious that the apparent economy in this vote in those years, was only a postponement of the unavoidable increase. The report did not state that there was any waste in this department; and he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) did not find on looking over the papers that any excess existed in the stores. Then a great part of the increased expenditure was caused by the increased facilities afforded to commercial transactions in distant parts of the world by our steam communications with America, the East Indies, and various other places. Taking the three heads of stores, buildings, and the packet service, upon them alone an increase of 2,300,000*l.* had occurred between 1835 and 1848. On two of these heads he thought a considerable reduction might now be made. He believed the steam navy had now reached its maximum; and the large buildings necessary for this purpose had now also attained a point where it would not be necessary to increase the expenditure upon them. The Admiralty was not unmindful of its duty in this respect, and a reduction of 638,000*l.* upon the two heads of stores and buildings alone would be made this year. He thought he had now answered the hon. Gentleman's objections to a considerable extent; so far as regarded the Navy. He would now turn to the Army, and he thought that by urging a larger reduction in the Army than they (the Government) found it in their power to make, due justice could not be done to that branch of the service. In considering this question, justice was rarely done to the British Army. There was no army on the face of the globe from which such hard service was demanded in time of peace. With the exception of the service of a portion of the French army in Algeria, and of the Russian army in one or two possessions, the armies of the Continental Powers remained always in time of peace in the countries to which they respectively belonged. With British troops the case was reversed. They were exposed alternately to the frosts of Canada, the tropical heat of the West Indies, and the burning plains of the East: year after year they passed from one extreme of climate to the other, and did their duty in all. He thought it would be cruel to make the service of such men harder than at present. The argument of the right hon. Baronet (Sir R. Peel), in 1845, was, that with the amount of force heretofore maintained, it was impossible to provide the necessary relief. The period of service of the soldier was then stated—and he did not think anybody would deem it too favourable an allowance—to be ten years abroad, five at home, or fifteen in India. It was impossible to give five years at home, with the number of maintained men in 1835. The average period for the British soldier to be at home between the years 1834 and 1838, was, instead of five years, four years and a month, and from 1838 to 1842, four years and ten months. It was then found necessary to increase the Army, in order to give a due relief to the British soldier, so that he might recruit himself after the hardships to which he had been exposed in our colonial or Indian service. The increase of men had enabled the military authorities to give the due amount of home service, and, with the present number, rather more. At present, eleven regiments were at home, who had been more than five years here; and only one regiment in the colonies had been out there beyond the ten years, and that only a few months. With regard to India, though the period of service was nominally fifteen years, yet in former years it had often extended to eighteen, nineteen, twenty, and upwards; and in one instance it even reached twenty-five years. In consequence of recent arrangements there were now only four regiments in India that had been there more than ten years. This desirable object had been therefore accomplished; but if any attempt should be made to press more severely upon the British soldier, it would before long be discovered that such a system was anything rather than conducive to economy. It was the intention of the Government to make such reductions in the Army as, without infringing the rotation of the soldier's service, would be consistent with what he considered it the paramount duty of a Government to do, namely, not to maintain a larger establishment than in their conscience they believed that the interests of the country required. The hon. Member, in referring to the events of last year, had truly described the great mass of the people of this country as being attached to the Crown and the constitution. The spectacle which this country exhibited during the past year, would form one of the proudest events of British history; but it was apparent from the admissions of the hon. Member himself, that there was a risk of the contagious example of the Continent spreading to this country; and, under the circumstances, it was his (the Chancellor of the Exchequer's) belief that no greater armed force was maintained than was absolutely necessary. Although the hon. Member had spoken that evening in a tone of commendable moderation, the language employed by the Liverpool Financial Association, in discussing the same question, was not equally temperate. In one of their speeches, or in one of the tracts issued by that association, it was stated that the Army was maintained solely for the purpose of feeding the younger sons of the aristocracy. Now he wondered when that new light had broken in upon these gentlemen at Liverpool. Within the last ten months the Government received application after application from Liverpool for additional troops. Troops were sent and encamped on the outskirts of the town; but the cry still came for more, and also for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. Was it quite just, or indeed honest, in a town, after having benefited so much by the presence of troops in time of need, and after having so loudly called for more—was it for them to be the first and turn round and say, that all the use of an army was to afford a provision for the younger sons of the aristocracy? The manufacturing and agricultural interests of the country were essentially bound up together; and he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) thought any necessary expense should not be grudged if it secured protection to life as well as to property and capital of all kinds. But gentlemen connected with the manufacturing interests must remember that they would be the first to suffer from the effects of tumult and plunder; and the working population, too, would be amongst the first to suffer from the burning of the mills, and the general injury done to trade by riotous and rebellious proceedings. The working man had the most direct and manifest interest in the maintenance of an efficient military force, which protected him from circumstances that would throw him out of employment, and all those other evils attendant upon such a state of things as in the course of last year the existing military force so essentially tended to prevent. The next source of expenditure was that for the Ordnance department; and he believed it was most necessary to maintain in full vigour that branch of their military establishments. It was the most expensive to raise, and took the longest time to form. In this branch they proposed no reduction of men. If the hon. Gentleman would only refer to recent events in India, he would perceive, what was a strange circumstance with regard to a nation so far advanced in all the arts of war as well as of civilisation as they were, that they seldom went into action in India without being overmatched by their opponents in artillery. The principal increase of expenditure in this department had been not merely in the increase of the force, but also for the purpose of effecting those changes of armament, both in guns of larger calibre and small arms, which the improvements of recent date have introduced. He did not wish to detain the House on this matter, but would simply refer to those matters which would, of course, be brought before the House by his hon. Friends the Secretary at War and the Secretary to the Admiralty when they brought forward their respective estimates. In the construction of cannon and small arms, great changes had taken place, and it would, he conceived, be a great act of cruelty on their part if they were to send their troops into action anywhere without putting into their hands the best weapons that modern science could afford. It happened, that during the Chinese war, a small portion of their troops, armed with flint muskets, were surrounded by three or four thousand of the enemy; but when they attempted to fire on them, their muskets would not go off. They defended themselves with great bravery for some time, until, fortunately, a body of marines, armed with percussion muskets, came up to their assistance. The immediate consequence was, that the Chinese were dispersed by the arrival of those who had muskets that would go off. The great increase of expense in the Ordnance department had been incurred for the purpose of making that change; but when the change was completely made, they would then be able to make a reduction. This had been to a great extent accomplished already, and he believed in the Ordnance Estimates there would hereafter be found a great reduction as to stores. In consequence of a prevalent feeling in the country some time ago as to the defences of this country not being sufficiently strong, many persons even of those who now advocated great reductions were affected by the feeling which then existed; and although he never had participated in the extraordinary alarm of a French invasion, he thought, at the same time, that they would have neglected their duty if they did not take adequate measures to afford necessary protection to their naval establishments. There was also another matter which had led to an increase of expenditure. It was a great object in that House to raise the moral condition of the British soldier. For that purpose it was necessary to provide him with better accommodation in barracks, and that a separation of the married from the unmarried men should take place. Those objects could not be attained without additional expense; and if they were to have men of a better description, it was only just and right that proper accommodation should be provided, and that the soldier should be raised in his own estimation, by being placed in a higher position than he had hitherto occupied. That, however, could not be done without an increased expenditure on the part of the public. The hon. Gentleman had alluded very shortly to an increase in the Miscellaneous Estimates. He (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) should not detain the House with too many figures on this point; but he might observe, that the increase in the miscellaneous estimates had almost altogether taken place in items which had been pressed on the Government by the House of Commons. Additional charges were thus put upon the general expenditure, and the Government were called upon to undertake duties that hitherto had been locally performed. In this manner new charges to an enormous amount were put on the miscellaneous estimates. It would be found that, since the year 1835, there had been new charges—perfectly new charges—put upon those miscellaneous estimates to the extent of 680,000*l.* a year. By the increase and transfer from other sources there had been an increase of nearly 1,000,000*l.* He found that on four heads alone—by the transfer of the county rates, the expense of prosecutions and the maintenance of convicts, the increase for education, and the increased expenditure for printing—there had been an increased expense of nearly 700,000*l.* He had now gone through the principal causes of increase in the expenditure, and trusted that he had shown good grounds for what had been done; and those same grounds afforded a conclusive argument against so sweeping a reduction as the hon. Gentleman proposed. He (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) was as much in favour of every practical economy as the hon. Gentleman himself could be; and no person could feel more interested in a reduction of expense than the person who was to provide the means for paying the money. But at the same time, if they were to give that protection to life and property, and to trade and commerce, which he believed to be necessary for the full development of their industrial resources, both at home and abroad, it was impossible to reduce their military and naval expenses to the extent proposed by the hon. Gentleman. Before he sat down, he would endeavour to show that they had not been unmindful of all practical economy where (keeping those objects to which he had referred in mind) they could effect it. He was happy to say that he very much concurred with the hon. Gentleman that they were in a very different position this year from that which they occupied this time last year, when it became necessary to bring forward the votes for the year. Be it remembered that although it was true that the French Revolution had not then broken out, there was a state of feeling pervading Europe, and existing in France, which might be expected to break out, and which actually did break out into revolution, through the greater part of the Continent. No man could say at the time what the effect might be of the effervescence that prevailed. No man could foresee what might happen from one month to another. Therefore they would not have been justified in reducing, last year, the amount of their Army or Navy. The noble Lord at the head of the Government accordingly said he was not prepared to reduce any men in the course of last year which he thought it necessary to maintain, and the maintenance of which he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) thought was fully justified by the occurrences that subsequently took place. They were now, however, in a very different situation. He thought it was evident enough that, on many parts of the Continent, those parties who had been the most anxious for the movement, had not seen so much reason to congratulate themselves on the results. He thought that there, as well as in this country, the revolutionary movement had been rather a losing game. In France, there was a pacific disposition displayed throughout the country, and that feeling had been shown by a proposition for the reduction both of their army and navy to a very large extent. He believed that the course pursued by his noble Friend (Lord Palmerston) had materially assisted the preservation of peace: passions had cooled—parties on both sides had seen what folly it was to engage in unnecessary revolutions or wars; all parties in France were desirous for the maintenance of peace; the prospects of the country were quite different from those of last year; and he believed there was no chance of this country being involved in hostilities. If the Government did not think so, they would not be justified in proposing the reductions which they should submit to the House. The few incendiaries in this country, to whom the hon. Gentleman alluded, had found how impracticable it was to excite the population of this country to take part in disturbances. The people were pretty well employed, the mills were generally at work. In the manufacturing districts, the danger of disturbance existed when the people were in a state of distress. That was always the case, and it was only natural that it should be so; but now the workmen were not only alive to the folly of causing disturbances, but had no inducement from want or distress to do so. In referring to the events of last year, the hon. Gentleman, singularly enough, avoided all mention of the sister country. In that country he believed it was not the fault of the parties themselves that serious disturbances had not taken place.

Mr. COBDEN: I did refer to it, and said there were only about 100 persons in arms.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: There were well authenticated accounts received that a much larger number of persons were assembled together; and his (the Chancellor of the Exchequer's) impression was, that nothing but the presence of an imposing military force had prevented the outbreak of an insurrection which the parties were ready and wicked enough to promote. It was no fault of those parties that that insurrection did not, he would not say succeed, but that that insurrection did not come to a much more formidable head. The recurrence, however, of such events was not possible, unless there was a stimulus given by agitation. It was not likely that there would be a repetition of such acts on the part of the peasantry: and the House had wisely, as he thought, given powers to the Government which would enable them to put down those who were likely to promote agitation. The Government had felt it to be in their power to propose a considerable reduction in the Army. The state of affairs in India had caused an application to be made by the East India Company to the Government for assistance, which had been met by sending to India three regiments from this country. Those regiments were taken off the British establishment; so that out of the number from which it was proposed by reduction the country should be relieved, amounting to 10,000 men, the actual reduction of numbers would be 7,000. The Army last year, exclusive of the troops in India, amounted to 113,000 men; this year there was to be a reduction to 103,000—rather more than in 1845, rather less than it was raised to in 1846. In 1845 it was 100,000, and 108,000 in 1846. Last year they had effected a considerable reduction in the estimates without any reduction of force. He wished to state to the House what the amount of the reduction was which they were able to accomplish last year without any reduction of force; as also the reduction which was made in the estimates before the House, and which they had been able to effect partly by the reduction of force, and partly by the reduction of expenditure. In various items to which he then need not more particularly refer, the reduction effected last year in those estimates, amounted to 828,500*l.* And the reduction in the estimates of this year, as compared, not with the original estimates of last year, but the reduced estimates voted at the end of the Session, amounted, on the Navy, to 730,850*l.*; on the Army, to 378,624*l.*; and on the Ordnance, to 337,873*l.*, making altogether a reduction of the naval and military expenditure in this year of 1,447,653*l.* He did not anticipate any great reduction in the miscellaneous estimates, because the convict expenditure was increasing and had increased so largely; but the reduction made last year, and that in the estimates now on the table, amounted together to less a sum than 2,275,853*l.* He hoped the House would take this as a proof that the Government were not insensible to the call made upon them for reduction. It was hardly worth while to go into details of other items upon which they had effected, and were still attempting to effect, a considerable reduction of expenditure, though inconsiderable, no doubt, as compared with those larger items of expenditure to which he had referred. The hon. Gentleman had referred to the charges for the collection of the revenue, and that was a subject of which the Government had not been unmindful. Neither with a desire to secure patronage to his noble Friend at the head of the Government, nor to any other person, did they wish to keep up offices that were unnecessary. They had put down last year the office of Paymaster of Exchequer-bills and the Paymaster of Civil Services, and had consolidated them with the office of Paymaster General, by which a saving had been effected in salaries alone of 16,000*l.* They had consolidated the office of Stamps and Taxes with the Excise, by which he had taken upon himself no inconsiderable responsibility; but he relied upon the energy of the present Chairman of the consolidated Board—a gentleman known to the House, Mr. John Wood, a most active and a useful public servant. They had thus effected a reduction of salaries in the higher branches of the department to the extent of 14,000*l.*, with the prospect of ultimately reducing the charge for the collection and management of those branches of the revenue to the extent of 80,000*l.* or 90,000*l.* more. They had appointed Commissioners to inquire into the collection of the Customs. He did not expect that any very large reductions could be made in that department, because in effecting reductions they must take care not to withdraw accommodation from the commercial bodies of the country in the discharge of their goods and the transaction of their business. From the first report of the Commissioners, the draft of which he had seen to-day, it would appear, however, that reductions were already proposed to the extent of 50,000*l.* When the hon. Gentleman had spoken of the extravagant manner in which the revenues of this country, and especially of the Customs revenue, were collected, he was entirely mistaken. In England, the charge for the collection of the Customs was under 6 per cent; but in France, where they had the system of one director general, as was advocated by the hon. Gentleman behind him, and a mode of keeping accounts which, it was said, necessarily enforced the utmost economy, the charge for collecting the Customs was between 12 and 13 per cent, just twice as much as in England. And in a neighbouring country that had the enjoyment of more democratic institutions, and very nearly universal suffrage—he referred to Belgium—the expense of collecting the Customs revenue was no less than 43 per cent. He could quote items of revenue that were collected in this country at 3 per cent, but then the Post Office revenue was collected at an expense of 58 per cent. It was not fair, however, to take any one item of that description. They should take the whole revenue of the country, including the Post Office at 58 per cent, and they would find that the charge of collection on the whole revenue was under 7 per cent. In France, it was 11½. There might be merits in more democratic institutions than they possessed in this country, and in universal suffrage; but with respect to the charge for collecting the revenue, it must be admitted that the advantage was possessed by this country. With respect to what had been said in reference to the pressure of taxation upon this country, he would remark, that it was one of those assertions which it was very difficult to meet. His hon. Friend would find it difficult to prove that assertion; and he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) might find it as difficult to refute it. If they were to take the incomes of individuals in this country, and the incomes of individuals in France, he believed the taxation would bear a less proportion to the income in this country than in France. He had a long statement to which he could refer in support of this assertion; but at the same time it was one of those documents which from the very nature of the question could not be considered as conclusive. It was a very difficult point to take a statement of that kind; but at the same time he was perfectly convinced that the proportion of the taxation in France to the income of the individuals in that country was infinitely heavier than it was in this country. But when they found that in the course of the last twenty years the people of this country had been relieved from taxation to an enormous extent, and when it was recollected that the taxation from which they had been relieved was principally that which pressed upon consumption and upon the materials for their manufactures, he did not see on what ground it was asserted now, almost for the first time, by various associations throughout the country, that this extraordinary pressure of taxation existed. During the last twenty years there had been taxes repealed, or reduced, to the amount of nearly twenty millions; in the same time there had been taxes imposed to the extent of about 9,800,000*l.*, so that the country was relieved to the extent of very nearly ten millions of one description of taxation or another. And the change, he repeated, was more material than the amount; for, whereas the taxes had been put upon property, they had been taken off the articles that constituted what the people of the country consumed, or the materials by which they were employed. He (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) entirely approved of that arrangement. Let it not be thought that he was finding fault with or quarrelling with it in the slightest degree. He entirely approved of that change. He concurred with the hon. Gentleman in believing that the absence last year of all duty on food was an essential element in contributing to the maintenance of peace in this country. He took his part in supporting those measures of relief to the commerce and consumption of the country; and, so far from finding fault with those measures, he entirely approved of them. Upon the great articles of consumption or utility very considerable reductions had been made within the last twenty years. Corn was now admitted free of duty, and so were meat and cattle; the tax upon beer had been totally repealed, and so had the duties upon many other articles. A reduction had been made in the duties on colonial sugar from 27*s.* to 13*s.* per cwt., being a reduction of more than half, and on foreign sugar from 63*s.* to 20*s.* The duty on colonial coffee had been reduced from 6*d.* to 4*d.* per lb., and on foreign coffee from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 6*d.* These were articles which the great mass of the population consumed. Then the duties had been taken off sheep and cotton wool; and cotton and woollen manufactures, flax, hides, and glass, had been relieved from duty. The House would see from this enumeration, which, however, was far from being complete, how many of those taxes had been repealed or reduced which pressed the most heavily upon the consumption, and upon the sources of industry and the means of employment of the working population of the country. Before sitting down, he should take the opportunity of referring to another matter, and it was one to which very possibly he would not have alluded, were it not for the notice which had been given by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose. He did not agree in opinion with his hon. Friend as to the course which he thought it right should be taken in postponing the supply till after the statement of ways and means. But after what he had stated last year, the House might reasonably expect from him (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) at an early day to inform the House how far the expectations he had held out last year had been warranted by the course of events. When he asked the House to renew the income tax for three years, he expressed his hope and expectation that in the space of three years, the income tax being renewed, and the other taxes maintained, the income of the country would more than equal the expenditure. He said so with some reserve in the early part of the Session, because things were then in so uncertain a state that no man could answer for the stability of events from one moment to another. At the close of the Session, however, he had renewed that assertion with greater confidence. He was happy to say that the experience of the period which had since elapsed had fully borne out his anticipation. The balance-sheet of the 5th of January last was the last authentic document of the revenue and expenditure of the year. The period to which his anticipations extended was the 5th of April next, while the balance-sheet only went to the 5th of January. It was not, however, an unreasonable supposition to assume that the income of the current quarter would not fall materially below that of the corresponding quarter of last year. The income for the year ending the 5th of April, 1849, as estimated by him in August last, was—

	£.
Ordinary and miscellaneous receipts...	51,550,000
Old stores, &c....	500,000
China money	80,000
Total estimated income ...	£52,130,000

The actual income up to the 5th of January, as shown by the balance-sheet, was—

Ordinary receipts ...	£52,422,338	
Miscellaneous... ...	118,656	
		£52,540,994
Old stores (three quarters of a year)...		308,415
China money		84,284
Total actual income ...		£52,933,693

instead of 52,130,000*l*. The sum at which he had estimated the China money was 80,000*l*., and the sum actually received was 84,284*l*. The sum appearing in the balance-sheet was 539,305*l*., but this was mainly received before April 5, 1848, and ought not to be included in this year. The sum actually received for China money since April, was 84,284*l*. Thus the income of the year (without including any more than the China money actually received within the period), which he had estimated as likely to be 52,130,000*l*. on the 5th of April next, had really amounted on the 5th of January, to 52,933,693*l*., being 800,000*l*. more than he had anticipated. The estimated expenditure, as stated and voted in August, amounted to 52,422,335*l*. The actual expenditure shown by the balance-sheet was 54,185,136*l*.; but, deducting from this the following items—for the Caffre war, 1,100,000*l*.; for naval excess, 1846-1847, 245,411*l*.; Irish distress, 276,377*l*., which he had never reckoned in the current expenditure of the year, and which three items made a total of 1,621,788*l*., the actual ordinary expenditure to the 5th of January had been 52,563,348*l*. Thus the actual income, up to the 5th of January, was 52,933,693*l*., and the actual expenditure, after the deductions which he had enumerated, was 52,563,348*l*., leaving a surplus of 370,345*l*., which more than covered the deficiency which he had stated in August as probable, namely, 290,000*l*. [An Hon. Member: How much from corn?] The receipts from corn had been 780,000*l*. He doubted not that it would be most satisfactory to the House to know that the revenue up to January had exceeded what he had calculated on for the present year up to April next, and that excluding the duties on corn the total income of the Customs up to January had exceeded what he had calculated upon receiving from the same source up to April. He disagreed with the hon. Member for Montrose in thinking that it was his duty to make a full financial statement at the present period; yet he would state, that although he should lose some income during the ensuing year from the cessation of corn duties, and although the extra amount of appropriations in aid, which had been available this year, and also the receipts from China money had come to a close, yet, making full allowance for the loss of income for the year 1849-1850 on these three items, namely—

Corn	£780,000
Credits in aid	500,000
China money	80,000
Total loss of income...	£1,360,000;

still the reduction in the estimates of 1849-1850, as compared with the past year, amounted to 1,447,353*l*., which was more than the anticipated loss of income from those sources. He would add, that although he gave up the item of corn altogether from his estimate, there would probably be some receipt from corn, even at 1*s*. per quarter. He thought that it was not unreasonable to expect that the ordinary revenue of the country of this year would be better than that of last year; and though he could not speak with any degree of certainty as to the amount, yet he felt confident that, with the reductions now proposed, the expenditure for the year would be clearly within the income on which he had a fair right to rely. He hoped he had convinced the House that it would not be safe or wise to reduce their expenditure at once or immediately to the extent which his hon. Friend had proposed. He trusted that he had also shown that the Government had not been unmindful of due economy in making all such reductions as they could make, looking to the real interests of the country, and the development of its industrial resources. He would again bear his testimony to the fair manner in which the hon. Gentleman had brought the question forward. He had endeavoured to meet it as fairly; and he hoped the House would pronounce a clear and decided opinion upon the point, and declare that it was not consistent with the real interests of the country to make the reductions to the extent, in the time, and in the manner recommended by the hon. Member for the West Riding of Yorkshire.

Mr. J. O'CONNELL had waited some minutes after the right hon. Gentleman had sat down, in order that those hon. Members who took a more immediate interest in the question might have an opportunity of addressing the House, and of adding anything they could to the very able, lucid, and convincing statement of the right hon. Baronet. He confessed his surprise that no direct reference had been made to the state of Ireland. He did not know whether it was that they were afraid of the subject, but he was satisfied that in consequence of the manner in which that country had been treated, there was an undefined—not such perhaps as could be pointed out in words—but there was a danger hanging over that country which the hon. Gentleman the Member for the West Riding was probably unwilling to allude to. He certainly did allude to that country in a passing way; but he (Mr. J. O'Connell) thought that hon. Gentleman was unintentionally mis-stating the case in saying that England had borrowed some of its recent disturbances from Ireland. The seed, he was satisfied, was of the soil born, and did not proceed from Ireland; it was that physical-force Chartism which had been so long resisted in Ireland, but which had, unfortunately, recently got into that country. He did not wish to say anything offensive, but he thought that the right hon. Gentleman (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) had alluded in too flippant a manner to the agitation in that country. He had no right to confound, for the sake of turning a period, those who were using constitutional means with a small and weak party in that country who were wild and criminal enough to rush into what was, after all, but a mockery of an insurrection. There never were 100 men in arms; there never were 50 men, and he believed at no time was there above 30 men, and these armed with scythes, pitchforks, and rusty fowling-pieces. He thought, therefore, the right hon. Gentleman might spare that unworthy sneer against men who, in their endeavours to keep the peace, and in their allegiance to the Throne, were as pure and determined as the right hon. Gentleman himself. He could assure him that the policy of the Government was not calculated to put down the dangerous species of agitation that prevailed in that country. It was a policy that would powerfully promote and stimulate the agitation of secret societies. An explosion from that quarter would be far more dangerous than what had been called in mockery an insurrection. He rose merely to call the attention of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cobden) to the effect that Ireland might have on the revenue and expenditure. The finance accounts for the present year were not yet before them, and he would call the attention of the hon. Gentleman to them when they did come. Let him see what the Navy expenditure had been in Ireland for the year ending 5th of April next. Let him look at the criminal prosecutions and the police expenditure, and then he would tell him that if Ireland was ruled justly and well—if the pledges given by the Minister in that House of remedial measures were carried out—the greater part of that expenditure would be saved. Omitting the year of what was called the insurrection, the average military expenditure in Ireland for many years had never been less than 1,100,000*l.*; the police expenditure had been also very large, while if the people were only contented—if they were treated like the people of Canada, who after being deprived of their just rights and liberties, were driven into a real rebellion, and who finally had every concession made to them, and were now contented—if the people of Ireland were only treated in the same way, there would be in the single item of military expenditure alone a saving of 700,000*l.* or 800,000*l*, per annum; and the police and Government prosecutions, which must amount to at least 150,000*l.*, reduced to one-third. With regard to revenue, Ireland was capable of yielding a much larger amount: hitherto it had been comparatively paltry—not because she was exempted from particular taxes, because the taxes were common to both countries, although the disproportion was immense. There was a sum of 30,000,000*l.* of the revenue of the country obtained from taxes which were common to both. In England these taxes produced 27,000,000*l.*, and in Ireland 3,000,000*l.* He alluded to the revenue from the Customs, Stamps, and Post Office. The only reason for that disproportion that could be assigned was, that the people of Ireland were so poor that they could not purchase customable articles nor stamps. Now the population of Ireland being one-third that of England, the amount of her contribution should be 9,000,000*l.* instead of 3,000,000*l.*; so here was a direct loss of 6,000,000*l.* sterling to the revenue of the country. The whole revenue of Ireland did not exceed 3,000,000*l.*, whereas if her resources were properly developed she would pay at least 12,000,000*l.* It appeared now that the people of England were overburdened, and Ireland was so situated that she could not assist them. He had felt it his duty to call the attention of the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the hon. Member for the West Riding to these facts, and if they did not alter their policy, he could assure them that instead of being any assistance, Ireland would continue to be a millstone round the neck of England.

Sir DE LACY EVANS said, that the right hon. Baronet the Chancellor of the Exchequer had, in his opinion, pointed out most clearly the discrepancy which existed in the financial statement of the hon. Member for the West Riding. He had shown it was not 10,000,000*l.* but 6,000,000*l.* which was the extra expense of the Army and Navy since 1835. That, certainly, was a slight error in the new budget of the hon. Member for the West Riding. He was not unfavourable to the principles of financial reform advocated by the hon. Member and his associates; on the contrary, he wished them every success in obtaining such reductions as were practicable and safe; at the same time, he thought they had done their cause some harm by mixing up personalities with the subjects which they were constantly in the habit of putting forth to the world. For his part, he could not see why a reduction of the Army or Navy to the lowest point might not be advocated throughout the country without any personal expression towards those who served either in the Army or Navy. If the newspapers had rightly reported the expressions of the hon. Gentleman, and if he had read those reports aright, it would appear that he had used some expressions not very honourable to gentlemen connected with those professions. If the armaments of this country had been excessive, or if the country had suffered in consequence of the large expenditure occasioned thereby, it was not the individual members of the Army, Navy, or Ordnance who were in fault—it was the fault of that House. No person had less influence with that House, in inducing it to decide that question, than the individual members of those three professions. There never was an Army or Navy which more obediently resigned themselves to the civil power than the Army and Navy of this country. Various expressions had also been used which might lead the people to believe that the military and naval wars had been brought about by the conduct of the general officers. Such was not the case; the general officers had been employed merely as individuals, acting under the civil power; and as a body he believed that they had done their duty in a manner which should have exempted them from imputations of that nature. The hon. Member had also alluded to the clothing of the Army, and had made use of expressions which were intended no doubt to be offensive—he had called them "a set of tailors." Now, he (Sir De Lacy Evans) did not complain of that on the part of the general officers; but he did on the part of the tailors themselves, because the term was used evidently with the idea of its being one of ridicule and opprobrium. He had the honour of representing many hundreds of tailors, some of whom were as good patriots, and as well disposed towards economy, as his hon. Friend himself; and it was, therefore, very unfair to use any term which might be considered as offensive or opprobrious to so respectable a body of tradesmen. It was not the fault of the general officers that they had been made contractors. For his own part, he should like to see the practice altered; but not having the power of making the alteration, they were certainly not to blame for acting upon the rule as they found it. He thought the regulation was a harsh one as regarded the officers; but as regarded economy, he was not quite sure how far it would be promoted by a change. The hon. Gentleman had made a personal attack upon himself, and upon the army which served under him in Spain; he had spoken of that army as mercenaries, and the fleet which acted in concert with it he had described as marauders. For his own part, he (Sir De Lacy Evans) had always treated unfounded assertions upon these points with the contempt which they deserved; and he had treated the strictures of the hon. Gentleman with contempt, because he conscientiously believed that troops serving by the desire and under the sanction of the Sovereign and the Government, and in promotion of an object declared to be interesting to England, ought to be exempted from such opprobrious remarks. The hon. Gentleman had spoken of the troops as mercenaries. They had certainly received remuneration; and he was glad to say that every shilling which was due had been paid up. And when speaking on the subject of remuneration for services rendered, he could not help congratulating the hon. Gentleman himself upon having received a very handsome remuneration. He would not reproach that hon. Gentleman by saying that he had entered upon his course of public service with any mercenary views. He thought that any such reproach from the one side would be as contemptible as from the other. With respect to the squadron, it was employed under exactly the same circumstances as the army; and to speak of it as a marauding squadron, was only to indulge a malignant and unworthy feeling.

MR. HUME expressed his deep regret that the hon. and gallant Member for Westminster should thus seek to infuse bitterness of feeling and personalities into a discussion of such grave importance, and which, by the previous speakers, had been conducted with such courteous moderation. No one had called the British squadron on the Spanish coast a marauding squadron, in relation to the conduct of the officers and men composing it, which confessedly merited no such designation. What his hon. Friend (Mr. Cobden) had said was, the squadron was a marauding squadron in a political and international point of view. There was one part of the hon. and gallant Member's speech quite accurate, and with which he could agree with him; that, namely, which declared the increase of our naval and military expenditure to have been the work of Parliament itself. Yes, it was the constitution of that House which lay at the bottom of the mischief, occasioning the creation of a number of officers in the Army, Navy, and Ordnance, infinitely greater than the most efficient maintenance of these services could require. Most assuredly, Members of Parliament would never have dealt with their own property as they had dealt with the national property; yet they were the trustees of this property, and owed to it their conscientious and scrupulous care. There was a Tory report of 1817, delivered in March, 1817—the report of a Committee on expenditure, appointed under Lord Castlereagh, and what did their Tory report recommend? Why this, that, bearing in mind the establishments of 1792, which were considered sufficient for all national purposes at that period, in contemplation of a long continuance of peace, the House should, in 1817, taking, of course, into full allowance the altered circumstances of the country in various respects, carry out the principle which characterised those estimates. With that recommendation from the Committee, would it be believed that at the present moment for every naval officer afloat or employed there were five or six reliefs? Would any person keeping his carriage have for it five or six coachmen besides the one who drove him? Would any one deny that the number of officers in the Navy and Army were kept up for the purpose of affording patronage and the means of placing the scions of the gentry and nobility? Was there any untruth in the assertion that the establishments were kept up for that express purpose? In the Army there were no less than 1,023 officers, at an expense of 127,000*l.*, who held commissions solely for the purpose of translating other officers from the regiments of the line, and *vice versâ*, and thereby to afford opportunities for promotion to the friends of the Government. Let them turn to the colonies. Was it possible for any one to contemplate those enormous establishments without feeling a conviction that they were kept up solely for the purpose of patronage? The Liverpool Financial Reform Association was perfectly right, therefore; and although the language used in that association's papers was strong, let those who quarrelled with it contradict the facts and figures contained in the papers published by the association, and never mind the language. He had only one or two observations to make on the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was very sorry to hear from that Minister that the greatest efforts the Government was disposed to make would only just bring the expenditure within the income of the country. The papers now in the hands of hon. Members showed a deficiency in the ordinary revenue of 800,000*l.* on the current year, the deficiency last year being 2,900,000*l.* The House was now told that there was to be an equalisation of the receipts and the expenditure; and the right hon. Baronet had called for the congratulations of the House on his having achieved so much. His (Mr. Hume's) hon. Friend, the Member for the West Riding, had said very truly that the people would be dissatisfied with the proceedings of the Government. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer had also stated that great reductions had been made in the taxes. The only observation which that assertion called for was that, although taxes might be altered in their amount, they still bore heavily on the labouring classes, and always had a tendency to depress consumption. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had asserted that what he proposed to effect in respect to reducing the establishments ought to satisfy the people, and further, that they ought to be satisfied with what had been done since 1837 in reducing taxes upon the necessaries of life, and the raw materials of the manufactures. What was the state of the case with respect to the revenue and expenditure since the year 1837? In that year the revenue was 50,600,000*l.*; 1838, 51,300,000*l.*; 1839, 51,900,000*l.*; 1840, 51,800,000*l.*; 1841, 52,300,000*l.*; 1842, 51,200,000*l.*; 1843, 56,900,000*l.*; 1844, 58,400,000*l.*; 1845, 57,600,000*l.*; and in 1848, 58,000,000*l.* Was this the way in which the people were to be satisfied? Every year the revenue drawn from their pockets increasing, and their burdens becoming heavier, and yet the Chancellor of the Exchequer had told them that night they ought to be satisfied. He (Mr. Hume) would tell the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the country would not be satisfied; the people wanted relief from their burdens, and the mere shifting of taxation would not satisfy them. The right hon. Baronet had asked wherein the pressure was so heavy, and had asserted that Belgium and France were heaxily taxed, and that the people of England were better able to pay their taxes than those nations were. He would tell the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in reply, that his assertion, even if true, was no excuse for taking one shilling more from the people than was required for the service of the country—and there was much more levied than the real wants of the nation required. The Committee of 1848 had pressed that necessity on the House in their report, but with very little effect. The expenditure had still gone on, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer now told the country that they were to expect little relief. All he could promise was, that no new debt should be incurred, but there was no reduction in the expenditure or the taxation. That statement most assuredly would not be satisfactory to the nation. There would be meetings held throughout the country, and sorely would they regret to hear such a statement from the Government. He wanted to know what were the circumstances which rendered so much larger an amount of expenditure necessary now than was required in 1835. The hon. and gallant Officer (Sir De Lacy Evans) had asserted that his hon. Friend had made a mistake, and that the additional expenditure for the establishments of the country was 6,000,000*l.*, and not 10,000,000*l.*, since the year 1835. But if the hon. and gallant Officer looked at the revenue accounts, he would find that the expenditure of 1835 was 44,000,000*l.*, whilst that of last year was nearly 54,000,000*l.* So that there was no mistake in his hon. Friend's statement. The mistake lay the other way. His hon. Friend called for reduction of the establishments, but not an instantaneous reduction. He only called on the Government to follow the precedents that already existed. There was ample excuse for every proposal made by him. In the year 1821 a resolution was agreed to by the House which was followed by the appointment of Mr. Bankes's Committee, and at that time the number of men in the Army was 81,240, whereas now it was 113,000. What was the language of Mr. Bankes's resolution? What was its result? The Motion was thus worded:—

> "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, to assure His Majesty that we have regarded with satisfaction the measures which have been taken by His Majesty's commands for a general revision of the department of the Customs in Great Britain; and to entreat His Majesty to give directions that a similar investigation may be extended to all the other branches of the revenue, in order to render its collection more economical, and its management more efficient; that for the purpose of affording a further relief to the country, His Majesty will be pleased to order a minute inquiry into the several departments of the Civil Government, as well with a view of reducing the number of persons employed in those departments, which from the great increase of business were augmented during the late war, as with reference to the increased salaries granted to individuals since the year 1797."

Let him refer for one moment to what took place in the years 1802, 1803, and 1804. They would find that all the Government officers received an increase of their salaries. Mr. Pitt and Mr. Henry Addington came down to the House and stated, that since the year 1797 the prices of all the necessaries of life had risen so much that the House must consent to raise the salaries of all the public officers of Government. So salaries of 300*l.* were raised to 1,000*l.*, because food had risen in price, and food was at that time 50 per cent higher than it was at present. The reason why Mr. Bankes moved for a reduction in the salaries of the public officers was, that the price of corn had fallen in 1821–1822, and it was then much what it now was. There was no reason why the House should not assent to the Motion of his hon. Friend, having agreed to a resolution of a similar nature in 1821. Mr. Bankes's resolution then went on to say—

> "Either in consideration of the additional labour thrown upon them during that period, or of the diminished value of money. And further, that His Majesty will be graciously pleased to direct that every possible saving which can be made, without detriment to the public interest, shall be effected in those more extended establishments which the country is obliged to maintain for the safety and defence of the United Kingdom and its dependencies, and more especially in the military expenditure, by a reduction in the numbers of the Army, and by a constant and vigilant superintendence over that and all the other departments connected with the application of the ample supplies granted by the House."

What more than this did his hon. Friend ask for? All that he had done that evening was to point out how the Army had gone on increasing from 81,000 to 113,000 men. Nor had the Chancellor of the Exchequer answered the inquiry as to what the circumstances of the country were, which rendered it necessary to keep up so large a military force. But it was not in one department alone that this increase of numbers and of expense had gone on year after year. In the Ordnance the same thing was witnessed; and to give the House an idea of how this increase had gone on, he would just state a few figures. In 1792, the whole of the force of the artillerymen and sappers was 4,848 men, the expense being 151,000*l.* In 1828 the force had increased to 8,682, at an expense of 471,000*l.* But would the House believe it to be possible that in 1848, after twenty years' peace, the artillerymen and sappers were 14,123 men, and the expense of their pay alone 711,000*l.*? Here, in the single department of the Ordnance, the sum required for the mere pay of artillerymen and sappers had increased since the year 1792 from 151,000*l.* to 711,000*l.*, the increase since 1828 being from 60 to 70 per cent on the charge for that year. What were the words of the second report of the Finance Committee of 1828 with respect to this branch of the Army expenditure?—

> "Towards the conclusion of the late war, circumstances obliged this country to have a large army in the field, and to maintain establishments much beyond what can, on any reasonable calculation, be requisite on a future occasion. The Committee, therefore, are of opinion that the establishments of the country should be regulated, not with reference to the policy of depending mainly on our Navy for protection against foreign invasion, and for the means of attacking our enemies. As the examination into the members of the Ordnance military corps presents to the Committee the first opportunity of making any remarks on the strength of our military establishments during peace, they feel it their duty to urge upon the House the expediency of bestowing a deliberate consideration upon the preceding observations, as very materially affecting the practicability of making a great reduction in the present scale of public expenditure. The Committee are of opinion that the pressure on our finances justifies them in making this appeal to the House. And if, upon acquiring a more complete knowledge of the state of the revenue and expenditure, they shall find either that a considerable reduction in the expenditure must be effected, or that new taxes must be imposed, in order to make the revenue bear such a proportion to the expenditure as is requisite to give stability to our finances, and to sustain public credit, they will have to consider the expediency of recommending in a future report a diminution in this branch of our military establishments."

This was the recommendation contained in the second report of the Committee on Finance of 1828, and that at a time when the Army was 80,000 men in all, and the Ordnance expenditure for pay had been raised from 151,000*l.* to 400,000*l.* The Committee threatened to notice the subject during the next Session. But what did the Government do? They were so much alarmed that the Committee was not suffered to meet again, and consequently it was never known what the recommendation would have been with respect to the Army and Ordnance expenditure. Neither of those establishments were so large in 1821 or 1828 as they now were, and the House therefore had as much cause to address the Crown as Mr. Bankes had; and what was the result of Mr. Bankes's Motion? Six weeks before Parliament met, there was a reduction of 3,000,000*l.* in the Army expenditure, and a further reduction took place the year after. It was the duty of the House to effect these reductions; and, for his part, he saw no hope of safety, nor any means of relief, to the people but in this manner. For all these reasons he regretted very much to hear the Chancellor of the Exchequer talk of congratulations, for there would be no response found in the country to these self-gratulations. There was one subject more that he wished to say a few words upon. His hon. Friend (Mr. Cobden) had pointed out the excess of the expenditure now over that of 1835. Of the whole amount of the expenditure of 59,000,000*l.*, 28,000,000*l.* was appropriated to the payment of the interminable funded debt. What was done with the remaining 31,000,000*l.*? It was not merely 10,000,000*l.* that they had to deal with, but with this vast sum, and therein consisted the elements of the reduction which his hon. Friend called upon the House and the Government to make. The time was coming when this must be done. The public would expect to see salaries which had been raised because corn had risen from 45*s.* to 100*s.* a quarter, reduced again, now that corn had fallen to 45*s.* 2*d.* The House ought to reduce them at once, in order to meet the growing discontent of the people. His hon. Friend deserved the greatest credit for having abstained from using any irritating topics in his speech. He (Mr. Hume, agreed with the Chancellor of the Exchequer in saying that all the surplus expenditure above that of 1835 did not originate with the Army. But much of it did, and that must be again reduced. On the grounds he had stated he should support the Motion of his hon. Friend. All that he asked for was as near an approximation to the expenditure of 1835 as could be effected; and the resolution, which was identical with that adopted unanimously by the House when proposed by Mr. Bankes in 1821, ought to meet with the approbation and support of every Member of that House. So far from his hon. Friend having a weak case, he had made out a very strong one, and he had placed his Motion on precisely the same footing as that on which the Committees of 1821 and 1828 were granted, and also his arguments were the arguments used by Mr. Pitt in his speech on the permanent peace establishment of the year 1792.

Mr. HERRIES said, that the real question before the House was this—whether, before they went into Committee upon the Estimates presented to that House by the Ministers of the Crown, they should adopt a resolution to the effect that it was expedient to reduce the expenditure of the country by ten millions. That was, practically, the question before them; and he said this, because it was really an essential point that the House should clearly understand what was the vote they were called upon to give. He must say he had been surprised at the little interest which appeared to have been taken in the Motion of the hon. Member (Mr. Cobden) by Gentlemen on that side of the House from which it proceeded. The hon. Member for Montrose had certainly risen at last, as if in despair; and even he had not added any material weight of argument, nor any energetic assistance to the Motion of the hon. Member for the West Riding. The real question, as he (Mr. Herries) had said, was whether the House would now, at once, vote that a reduction could and should be made in the national expenditure to the extent of ten millions; for he considered the words "with all practicable speed," as being a mere qualification as to time alone, and not affecting the extent or character of the pledge to be given. If the proposition had been, that they should use all possible diligence in endeavouring to diminish the expenditure of the country, the Motion indeed would have presented itself under a very different aspect; but the present Motion was a demand upon the House to make a rash and impracticable engagement, and to accuse itself of a total absence of any previous disposition to diminish the national expenditure. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had complimented the hon. Member for the West Riding on the moderation and forbearance which had marked his observations. In that compliment he (Mr. Herries) could not join; for, although the tone and language of the hon. Gentleman's speech were moderate, and sufficiently tempered to suit the atmosphere of that House, he (Mr. Herries) could not forget that the speech of the hon. Member was, after all, but a repetition of that which had been ringing in the public ear for the last six months from Liverpool, from Manchester, and every other scene of agitation, where the same things had been said, though not exactly in the same terms. There had been no diatribes against the aristocracy that night—no insinuations that the Army was kept up as a provision for young men of fashion—nothing so invidious and unjust as that had been uttered on the present occasion. The hon. Member for the West Riding was violent in one place, and decorous in another; but if the hon. Gentleman was to have the privilege of using inflammatory and irritating language in one place, and sober and discreet expression in another, he (Mr. Herries) would much prefer that he should give way to his violence and invective in that House, and reserve his decorous argumentation for those places where his audiences consisted of assembled multitudes composed of more inflammable materials. It was for this reason that he could not join in the compliment of the right hon. Baronet. He could not but think, too, that the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government in the last Session of Parliament had materially assisted in promoting that spirit of agitation of which this Motion was the result. If the question of the expenditure of the country, of the policy and propriety of the estimates, had been debated, as they ought to have been, last Session; if they had not, on the contrary, been withdrawn, as it were, from their cognisance, and submitted to a Committee—in his opinion far from a constitutional proceeding—there would have been, no doubt, that full discussion of these estimates which would have produced such explanations on the part of the Ministers of the Crown as would have rendered ineffective much of the language which they had heard elsewhere. He considered that they had not been treated at all fairly in regard to the estimates last year. It was understood in the House that the estimates were referred to the Committee unconditionally; yet one of the first resolutions that Committee came to was, that they would not enter into any consideration of the policy of the estimates. But that very policy was the whole of the question as far as the immediate duty of the House was concerned. The estimates having, however, been withdrawn from their cognisance, and referred, as it was supposed, unconditionally to another tribunal, the Secretaries for the various departments came down, one after the other, and very quietly took votes on account, the House believing that such a step was only taken until the Committee reported. The House had been kept in ignorance of the fact that the Committee would not report upon that subject; therefore he charged the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer with, in some measure, having created the agitation, although he had certainly done good service that night in allaying it. He could not deny that he had listened with considerable satisfaction to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer that evening; and he was glad that there appeared to be hopes of some material reductions in the expenditure of the country, and that in future it might be expected to approximate more closely than it had lately done to the revenue. He should not now enter into any detailed discussion of our financial prospects, because the right hon. Gentleman was the proper authority on the subject; but he had no doubt that when they came to the consideration of the details, every Member of the House would lend his aid, in a true constitutional spirit, to effect every practicable and reasonable reduction of the expenditure. But the hon. Member for the West Riding had instituted a comparison between the expenditure of the Governments of England and France. He (Mr. Herries) being thus provoked to follow the hon. Gentleman in that contrast, was compelled to declare that he did not think he (Mr. Cobden) had studied that subject quite well enough to warrant him in coming, as he had done, to a conclusion, in respect to the financial administration of the two nations, unfavourable to that of England. Without at all affecting to criticise the proceedings of other countries—for they had quite enough to do to discuss their own affairs in that House—he could not but think, at the same time, that a very important lesson might be learnt by looking at the comparative financial progress of the two neighbouring countries. If they reviewed the financial progress of the English and French nations for the last twenty-eight years, they would see much more cause for congratulation than for blame, or regret, in the comparative good management of our own Government, under the sanction of Parliament, when placed in contradistinction with that of France. In confirmation of these views, he would show to the House, as briefly as he could, the comparative progress of expenditure and revenue in the two countries; and in doing so, he would also incidentally show the comparative expense of democratic and monarchical institutions. He would first take the expenditure of France, commencing from the year 1820 — a year in which the Government of that country might be said to have settled down to a normal state, and when, the army of occupation having been withdrawn, their budget might be considered as placed upon something like a permanent footing. The expedenture of France in the year

1820 was	£35,000,000
1821 do.	35,280,000
1822 do.	38,000,000

From this period until the year 1830, it would appear that the affairs of France were administered, generally, with much regard to economy, and, consequently, with little variation in the yearly expenditure—with the single exception of the year 1823, in which the ill-advised expedition into Spain was undertaken. That measure added 8,000,000*l.* to the budget of 1823, which was, however, again reduced in the following year to about 38,000,000*l.*; which continued to be its average amount, with no material fluctuations, until the year 1830. In that year a great change occurred—there was a revolution. Revolutions were expensive things — a fact which it would well become those who were disposed to promote them to bear always in mind; and, above all, to inculcate, if they would deal honestly in their agitations, on the minds of the multitudes whom they incited to plunge into them. In 1830—the happy year of three glorious days—an enormous increase of expenditure was incurred for the revolution itself, whereby the amount of the budget of 1831 was swelled to the sum of 60,000,000*l.*; and though a part of that excess was reduced in the year following, all the subsequent years exhibited a greatly advanced rate of expenditure, which never fell back into the average of the previous ten years. The figures were as follows:—

In 1831	£60,000,000	In 1839	£44,000,000
1832 ...	44,000,000	1840 ...	46,800,000
1833 ...	44,800,000	1841 ...	54,000,000
1834 ...	40,000,000	1842 ...	52,000,000
1835 ...	41,800,000	1843 ...	55,700,000
1836 ...	40,600,000	1847 ...	60,000,000
1837 ...	41,560,000	1848 ...	72,000,000
1838 ...	42,500,000		

It was well deserving the attention of the House that the rapid expansion of the public expenditure in France seemed to keep pace with the progressive infusion of more popular elements into her government and constitution; and this remarkable circumstance suggested an observation on a doctrine which had been propounded to the good people of Manchester, by the Member for the West Riding, the effect of which was, that the minute and progressive subdivision of property which prevailed in France, under the laws of that country, was an admirable safeguard against a propensity to war, by its tendency to arrest the expenditure by which war was always accompanied; his theory being, that inasmuch as a vastly greater number of persons were made sensible of the burdens of that expenditure in their own persons, as proprietors, the resistance to it would be proportionably increased, and the tendency to war be counteracted. He (Mr. Herries) had been greatly surprised by the maintenance of such a doctrine in the face of history and experience. Why, let the hon. Member but look at these papers to which he had just been referring, and then tell him what he meant by stating that this subdivision of property must have the effect of preventing war, because it prevented expenditure. Did he not know that this very subdivision of property, and all this expanding expenditure, had been going on together in France—and that a great part of that expenditure was for the Algerine war—a war which had been forced upon the Government by the pressure from without, and carried on in opposition to the feelings as well of the Government as of the moderate portion of the French people? Let the hon. Member, then, whenever he again addressed the people of Manchester on the subject of agitating for a reduction of the national expenditure, and compared democratic with monarchical institutions—let him, if he chose to give the preference to democracy, tell his audiences that all history taught, that if they must needs have republics and democracies in preference to such a monarchy as that under which we live, they must be well prepared to put their hands deep into their pockets to pay for the change. [Mr. Hume: Look at America.] He would willingly make the comparison between England and America, if the hon. Gentleman would tell him what the expenses of America were. But without knowing the separate expenditure of each member of the Confederation, as well as that of the Central Government, all attempts at such a comparison would be idle. But he would now proceed to exhibit, in contrast with the expenditure of France during the period from 1820 to 1848, that of England in the same series of years; and in doing so, he would show how much more regular and economical our public expenditure had been. He found that the average annual income and expenditure of the united kingdom, in every five years of the period, had been as follows:—

	Income.	Expenditure.
From 1820 to 1825 ...	£56,472,000 ...	£56,150,000
1825 to 1830 ...	54,612,000 ...	55,636,000
1830 to 1835 ...	47,233,000 ...	47,543,000
1835 to 1840 ...	47,262,000 ...	47,924,000
1840 to 1845 ...	49,840,000 ...	50,733,000
1845 to 1848 ...	54,127,000 ...	55,596,000

On a comparison, then, they found that, whilst in England they commenced in 1820 with 56,150,000*l.*, and ended in 1848 with 55,596,000*l.*, in France they commenced in 1820 with 35,000,000*l.*—and ended in 1848 with 72,000,000*l.* But there was another topic which, in reviewing the expenditure of this period, was worthy of consideration. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had touched upon it, when he told them how much taxation had been reduced within a certain period in this country; and it might be as well further to remind the House what had been the changes in taxation since the year 1816. There had been a reduction of taxation in that time, the annual produce of which amounted to 53,390,000*l.*, while, on the other hand, the new duties imposed amounted only to 14,000,000*l.*; the difference, being 39,000,000*l.*, showed the amount of annual taxation remitted within the thirty-two years. Notwithstanding this vast relief from taxation, the public income stood nearly the same at the close of the period as at the commencement of it: a result, of which, he thought, this country had great reason to be justly proud; for it was such a proof of increasing wealth, and strength, and prosperity, as no kingdom in the world had ever before been able to exhibit. And there was another lesson to be derived from this great remission of taxes without a corresponding loss of revenue. There were many persons out of doors who were very clamorous for the substitution of direct for indirect taxation; but this relief would have been impossible if they had derived their whole public income from direct taxation, instead of that system of mixed, direct, and indirect taxes which had prevailed during all this period. This, then, was another lesson from that very remarkable comparison which he had read to the House as to the progress of expenditure in England and in France. And now, with reference to this Motion of the hon. Member for the West Riding, he must again say that it had been singularly ill-supported that night. They had heard of it for months past; and how had the battle been fought that evening? Why, nobody rose, at least for some time, even to second the Motion. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had certainly manfully resisted the hon. Gentleman. After that the hon. Member for Montrose rose; but he did not grapple with the subject with his accustomed vigour. The hon. Member for the West Riding did not, himself, make a good fight for his proposition. He told the House of things past and things to come, and of his intense desire for the reduction of our expenditure. In that he was not singular. Why, so was he (Mr. Herries) also for reduction. He was ready to go heartily along with the hon. Member for the West Riding, if the hon. Member would only go at a different pace; if the hon. Member would only go on step by step; but, as it was, he must confess that he did not believe that the hon. Member for the West Riding anticipated any success for his proposal, and he was not quite sure that the hon. Member was imprudent enough even to desire it. [Mr. Cobden: Wait.] Why, he must wait; but he must own that what he had heard that night encouraged him to hope that no violent changes would be attempted, much less effected. He trusted that they would all come to the discussion of the estimates with the earnest desire to effect every possible reduction that could be made; but that there would not be the thought, much less the wish, to take a single step which might be conducive to endanger the credit or diminish the strength of the country, or lay upon the military servants a heavier burden than they could bear, if with diminished numbers they should be called upon to do increased duty. He trusted, then, that there would be as much caution on the one side, as economy on the other. Theirs would be the earnest desire to effect every possible reduction. With agitators he was not content to go—with an agitation that was based on no solid foundation he could not co-operate—an agitation, too, that was conducted in a spirit of hostility and hatred against particular classes, upon which obloquy and abuse had been heaped which were wholly unjustifiable. He would tell hon. Gentlemen opposite that they had no right to impute to him or his friends any indisposition to retrenchment and economy. They were prepared to promote both to the utmost. There had been much said by the hon. Gentleman on subjects which he did not know why they were introduced, because the hon. Gentleman did not explain himself fully with regard to them. For instance, as to the heavy burden of local taxation. [Mr. Cobden: The money expended on rates for the relief of the poor, including Ireland, was increased from 5,000,000*l.* to 8,300,000*l.*] That is, the hon. Gentleman instituted a comparison between 5,000,000*l.* at one period, and 8,000,000*l.* at another; but at the former period the hon. Gentleman forgot that there were no poor-rates in Ireland—that there were no poor-rates in Ireland in 1835. Altogether, there was some obscurity, as it appeared to him in that part of the hon. Gentleman's speech, and he should not therefore further refer to it. They were told by Her Majesty's Ministers that this year a considerable reduction might be effected—that the aspect of public affairs would enable them to make that reduction. Now he felt bound to say that the aspect of public affairs, at the present juncture, was in no respect so favourable as at the period when the estimates for the last year were presented to the House. The reverse was the fact; and the noble Lord at the head of the Government was in error when, on a former occasion, he stated otherwise; for the estimates for 1848 were prepared at the close of 1847, when nothing had yet occurred to disturb the peace of Europe. He (Mr. Herries) was, therefore, justified by the intervening occurrences in recommending great caution in the diminution of our military establishments. He was not disposed to take a gloomy view of our prospects with respect to the maintenance of peace. The state of public affairs might, and he hoped would, take such a turn as would best accord with the wishes of all lovers of peace, and satisfy the expectations of the noble Lord at the head of the Foreign Department; but with all respect for that noble Lord, he said that there was nothing in the present aspect of affairs which should induce them to rely entirely on so happy a result, and to make such extensive reductions as would materially diminish the strength of their Navy and Army. He hoped that the result of the present state of affairs might be peace; but still there was some danger abroad, and they should be prepared for whatever might occur. They had been told in the most emphatic language that disaffection in Ireland was not extinguished; and that there were reasons for fearing that the present distress might increase the disaffection beyond that even which now existed. Such at least was the effect of the reports of the Poor Law Commissioners. They ought then, in such circumstances, to use the greatest precaution before they adopted any reduction which might impair those services on which they must rely in the event of any untoward occurrences at home or abroad. He did not mean to trouble the House any longer; and he would not have risen, on the present occasion, but for what fell from the hon. Member for the West Riding, who had provoked him to do so by the comparison he had made between the expenditure of the Governments of England and France, which was in every way so greatly to the advantage of this country.

Mr. MILNER GIBSON thought it was not very consolatory to the landed interest to find a financial leader of the agricultural party holding out such slender hopes of any material reduction in the expenditure of the country, and even attempting to discourage those who had plans to offer; carrying the principle of discouragement so far as even to throw some censure on the Government for the efforts they were making to reduce the expenditure. Let him remind the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Herries) and his hon. friends, that whatever they proposed in the nature of relief to the landed interest must have its foundation upon a reduction of the expenditure. He (Mr. Gibson) had been invited by his constituents, and many hon. Gentlemen had been in a similar position, to vote for the repeal of this tax, and for the repeal of the other tax, and it was an agreeable thing sometimes to give a popular vote of that kind; but he said, emphatically, that no man could give an honest vote for the repeal of any tax, unless he was prepared to reduce the expenditure, so as to place the surplus revenue at the disposal of the State to apply to the relief of taxation. Therefore he said that the right hon. Gentleman, unless prepared to reduce expenditure, was not justified in holding out any hopes whatever of relief to the landed interest in other places. A noble Duke, in another place, had said that the malt tax was doomed; he said he would not give one year's purchase for the malt tax. What expectations were these to hold out to the occupying tenantry of the country, unless you were prepared to take the honest course of reducing the expenditure? Did you mean to repudiate the debt—were you prepared to endanger or put in jeopardy the public faith? If you naturally rejected such an idea, then he said do not hold out expectations of that kind through your leaders, whether in Parliament or in your public meetings, unless you were prepared to join those who had an honest desire to reduce the expenditure of the country, and thus put this relief and these advantages within the reach of the tenant-farmers of the country. The right hon. Gentleman had complained of his hon. Friend (Mr. Cobden) holding one kind of language in this House, and another sort of language at a public meeting. Decorous here, his hon. Friend was said to be, but violent and inflammatory at Manchester. He (Mr. Gibson) must own that there was an earnestness in these public meetings, upon the question of relief from taxation, which might draw speakers into a degree of enthusiasm. It was quite natural; a speaker always sympathised with his audience. If you were addressing those who, as the right hon. Gentleman had truly said, were apathetic upon the question of reducing public burdens, you felt a heavy weight, and it was difficult to give that spirit to your remarks that you did in an assembly where all was earnestness and all was animation. But he was surprised at some of the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman; he was surprised at his accusing his hon. Friend of what he termed a democratic tendency. He used the term as one of reproach, although he (Mr. Gibson) did not know why it should be so. His hon. Friend thought it was desirable there should be a great many people in the country possessing property. His right hon. Friend the Member for the West Riding said, there were more people who possessed property in France than were to be found in England. The right hon. Gentleman's principle was, that the fewer the people that had property, the safer were the institutions—that the greater the number of the paupers, the better the chance of their institutions being saved from disorder. [Mr. HERRIES: No, no!] That was the tendency of the right hon. Gentleman's observations, as he understood them. His hon. Friend said, that the more property was divided in proportion to the population, as in France, the less danger was there of their institutions being disturbed; whereon the right hon. Gentleman had laid down the opposite principle, condemning the division of property, and thus leading to the conclusion that the increase of pauperism was favourable to the preservation of peace! [Mr. HERRIES: No!] That seemed to him to be the argument of the right hon. Gentleman. It had been said, in answer to his hon. Friend, that it was not known why the subject of local taxes was introduced into this discussion—that they would not transfer any of the local burdens to the State. They certainly could not do so without reducing the expenditure of the country; and if they did reduce that expenditure, then, he said, they might be enabled to deal with some of the local burdens. The greater the amount of local taxes paid by the people of this country, the stronger were their claims that the general taxes should be reduced. Such was the case in England; and it was his firm belief that England, with a large amount of the wants of society supplied by local taxation, might be the cheapest governed country in Europe, as far as the expense of general government was concerned. He was for a reduction of the Government expenditure, which was supported by general taxation from the resources of the tenant-farmers, and all other classes of the community. He believed that it was not necessary to carry to so large an extent the peace establishments of military and naval armaments. The right hon. Gentleman's whole speech was beside the question. He told us the French expenditure had been increasing for forty, or thirty, or twenty years, and had got up to what ours was now; but he did not tell the House that any of his hon. Friend's facts were questionable. His hon. Friend said in his speech, you have increased your expenditure ten millions since 1835; that is a strong *primâ facie* case against you, and the *onus probandi* lies on you to show that the augmentation was necessary, and the continuance of it was warranted. That was what his hon. Friend said; but no answer had been given to that view of the question, and no attempt had been made to show that any of the facts which his hon. Friend submitted to the House were incorrect, or did not bear out his argument. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that there was some discrepancy in the matter, for the proposed reduction in armaments to the standard of 1835 would only save 6,000,000*l.*, and not 10,000,000*l.* If going back to the standard of 1835 would save 6,000,000*l.* out of the 10,000,000*l.*, it might be easier to make a reduction of 10,000,000*l.* than his hon. Friend (Mr. Cobden) thought, for it would require a less reduction in the armaments than was stated by his hon. Friend. He (Mr. Gibson) really believed that this would be the case. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that his hon. Friend had introduced into his speech a great number of specialities, and had shown that the expenditure had been much increased by specialities occasionally arising, and which had now passed away. The right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer, not satisfied with this part of the speech of his hon. Friend, mentioned other cases of a similar character, such as the creation of the steam navy, upon which a very large sum had been expended, but upon which they had been told that the extraordinary expenditure might be considered as nearly closed. The right hon. Gentleman mentioned the expenditure last year of 2,300,000*l.* for naval stores, and that many of those charges were of a peculiar character, and must not be regarded as a part of the permanent expenditure of the country. The right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed to argue more strongly for the proposition of his hon. Friend than any of his (Mr. Cobden's) friends had done. The right hon. Gentleman had not expressed the slightest doubt as to any of the specialities mentioned by his hon. Friend as to the causes of increased expenditure, but had added others of his own. He (Mr. Gibson) was, therefore, very sanguine that between his hon. Friend and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, a reduction of 10,000,000*l.* would be effected in the general permanent expenditure, if time was only given for that purpose. The right hon. Member for Stamford (Mr. Herries) went back to 1827, and said that the expenditure in that year was nearly equal to the present expenditure. [Mr. HERRIES observed that he had mentioned the year 1820.] The expenditure in 1820 and 1827 was nearly the same in amount. From the latter year they went on reducing until they came down to the year of the lowest expenditure, 1835, to the very amount which the hon. Member for the West Riding now wished the House of Commons to adopt as its standard scale. This process of reduction was first of all commenced by the Duke of Wellington, then at the head of the Government. Soon afterwards, the Whigs came in, and having carried the Reform Bill, continued this great business of the reduction of our national expenses. Every successive year, for some time afterwards, economy and reduction continued to make important advances, thanks to the influence of a pressure from without. Year after year the expenditure was lowered, till in 1835 it stood at a figure which was ten millions less than it had been before, and than that it had now attained, and to which it was the object of his hon. Friend to bring it back. Since then, however, the professions had continued to dictate to the Governments which had by turns attained to power, their own views of the proper scale at which our military and naval establishments, and the contingent expenses connected with them, should be fixed, with a view to the due protection of the interests of the country, until the expenditure had reached an excess over and above that of 1835, amounting to 7,000,000*l.* for armaments alone. Well, then, it was under these remarkable circumstances that his hon. Friend the Member for the West Riding invited that House to commence again the same sort of campaign against this inordinate tendency to excessive expenditure on the warlike establishments of the country, which had been undertaken in former years, in the same spirit, and had been conducted to results that had been so signally successful. His hon. Friend asked of that House once more to interpose with its authority and sanction a reduction of the same sum of ten millions, of which, in 1835, as compared with preceding years, the expenditure had been found safely susceptible. Hon. Gentlemen on his side, then, had the test of experience to show that their project was practicable. The proposition before the House was no matter of mere speculative possibility. Besides, the right hon. Baronet the Chancellor of the Exchequer had himself recognised the plan of the Member for the West Riding as practicable in principle; for he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) himself had that night voluntarily announced his intention of making reductions in certain items of the public charge that would amount to no less than 1,500,000*l.* per annum. Then, again, the same eminent authority had remarked to the House, that the large amount of 1,100,000*l.*, appearing on the last balance-sheet on account of the expenses of the Kaffir war, was one which would not occur in the future expenditure; so that here was a total of 2,600,000*l.* towards the aggregate of ten millions by which his hon. Friend (Mr. Cobden) desired to reduce the expenditure. By that proposal his hon. Friend by no means intended to impair the necessary force of those establishments which were essential to the full protection of the interests and safety of this empire. He only implored them not to uphold a scale of excessive expenditure, which was not required by those interests, and the discontinuance of which would not endanger the safety of the country; nor did he (Mr. Gibson) at all despair of the success of his hon. Friend's most useful efforts. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had already helped him on his way by indicating reductions to the amount of two millions and a half. Now, he (Mr. Gibson) was sanguine as to the feasibility of his hon. Friend's scheme for reducing the expense of our military establishments much further. And he was the more sanguine on this head, when he found men of the highest official station, and of great professional standing, widely differing from one another on the important question touching what should be the proper permanent scale of these establishments. This singular discrepancy of opinions in such quarters assuredly gave them reasonable ground for believing that there was, in fact, nothing like any settled principle upon which those establishments were founded. It seemed, in every case, to be a mere haphazard estimate. On no point did these opinions differ more widely than on the amount of force necessary to be kept up for the external defences of the country. It was but a very little while ago since an illustrious Duke—the Duke of Wellington—had told them, in a memorable letter, that the country was defenceless, and that it was essential that a much larger military force than that we now possessed should be maintained, with a view to making due provision for the protection of this country; and that there should be a vastly increased outlay immediately made upon the fortifications of our coasts. Now, the Duke himself was an example to justify the conviction which he (Mr. Gibson) entertained, that on matters of this kind every one fixed upon some particular standard to which (as the hon. Member for the West Riding to the year 1835) he was accustomed to refer. The standard of the illustrious Duke seemed to be the year 1804, and he had distinctly assigned his reasons for choosing it. He (Mr. Gibson) wished to be cautious in quoting the recorded opinions of any individual with all possible correctness. He had therefore taken care to refer to the letter of the Duke, wherein his Grace's notions were clearly expressed, and from which he would read to the House a passage that was certainly of a very remarkable character:—

> "I would recommend to have an alphabetical list of stores, examined by a Committee, and made out in form as upon the enclosed half-sheet of paper, by ascertaining what there was in 1804, and what there is in store now, of each article, and the difference between the two accounts. I have taken the year 1804 as the standard, as that was the year in which the invasion was threatened. It was previous to the employment of the armies in the Peninsula and North America, in short, as nearly as possible similar to the political circumstances in which we stand at this present moment, except that we are now at peace with France, we were then at war."

It was not necessary for him (Mr. Gibson) to remind the House how greatly other professional opinions differed from this. In 1845, as the House would remember, the noble Lord (Lord Palmerston) now at the head of the Foreign Office, came down and complained, in his place in Parliament, that there was no country of Europe which was at that time in so defenceless and insecure a condition as England, on account of the inadequacy of her establishments. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir R. Peel), however, who was then at the head of Her Majesty's Government differed from that noble Lord; and declared that he thought England was properly and sufficiently protected by her then existing establishments; and he stated, that he should be very sorry to see two such countries as France and England running the one against the other, in a race, not of commerce and of civilisation, but in a jealous increase of their naval and their military establishments. So that there was, among even the most eminent of public men, a great difference of views and opinions on matters of this nature. In truth, he began to suspect that the secret of these conflicting opinions upon the scale of the armaments we ought to keep up was this—that the whole question was a sort of party-card, which was alternately played by one set of public men against another. Thus it had always suited the Gentlemen who were out of office to say to those who were in office, "You are cutting down the Navy too much; you are crippling the Army, you are endangering the safety of the country." Nothing was more easy than to produce a species of panic in the public mind on subjects of this nature; and this might have been the reason which had induced many who would otherwise have opposed such extensions to push the increase of armaments to a scale much beyond the real exigencies of the country. The differences between the views of the military and naval authorities on such points were most perplexing to men like himself, who, without professional experience on such subjects, were willing to be taught, and to bow to authorities. The inquiries before the Committees on Army, and Navy, and Ordnance Estimates would throw no light on the question of what force was required; for, as the right hon. Member for Stamford (Mr. Herries) had most truly observed, the very point on which it might have been imagined that the Committee to whom it was referred to report on these estimates, would most especially have directed its attention, was that which it now seemed they were expressly precluded from going into at all—namely, what was the proper amount at which the several establishments of the united kingdom might properly be fixed. He wanted some explanation about the charge that the stores in the dockyards were improperly reduced previous to 1835. He wanted to know how it happened, if, in 1835, the naval stores were so inadequate to the defence of the country, an officer of Sir T. Hardy's high standing and character, one of the most eminent and distinguished in the British Navy, could have been induced as a

Lord of the Admiralty to certify to the propriety of the reductions which were then proposed and carried out. The right hon. Member for Ripon (Sir J. Graham) left, upon quitting office in 1834, a memorandum stating what he considered an adequate naval force for the peace establishment at that time. The memorandum left by the right hon. Baronet comprised a distinct statement of the force which he deemed essential for the maintenance of the interest and the honour of the country. All he would say on this subject was, that one half of the amount of the present naval force was then deemed sufficient by the right hon. Baronet—was then deemed sufficient as compared with the amount which was now on hand. Whatever, therefore, was the justification for their increase under his successor, in reference to the presumed dangers of intervening periods, we had now double the quantity when that danger no longer existed. If the amount of stores and force was really so low then—and it had been requisite since so largely to increase it—he begged to ask Gentlemen opposite how it happened that in the very first estimate presented by the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel in 1835 they had proposed 1,000 men less, with a reduction of nearly 100,000*l.*, on account of stores, than the right hon. Baronet (Sir J. Graham), from the estimates prepared by him, had deemed sufficient for all requisite purposes of protection? Were the hon. Gentlemen prepared to explain how the noble Duke and the right hon. Baronet (Sir R. Peel), with all the facts officially before them, could have proposed such further reductions then, if the amount of stores and the number of men had been previously reduced too low, or were not now raised too high? He could only explain this anomalous state of things by supposing that the people themselves had since that time gradually become indifferent to the necessity of reducing the growing expenditure of these services, and that all Governments, whether Whig or Tory, were compelled to permit the increase of their establishments by the power of professional influences around them the moment the public attention happened to be withdrawn, from any cause, from the growing excess of our expenditure. A gallant Admiral (Admiral Bowles), who was a Member of this House, in the printed evidence which was attached to the report of the Committee on the Estimates, had strenuously contended that the naval force now kept up by this country was utterly inadequate to the duties that devolved upon it—that no man who knew anything of the service would venture to say that it was maintained upon anything like the scale at which it should be kept up. The right hon. Baronet (Sir F. Baring) the present First Lord of the Admiralty asked him this very significant question—"Did you ever know a time at which the profession to which you belong was satisfied with the existing scale of that force?" An obvious inference might be drawn from this question, on which he would not now dwell; but what he (Mr. Gibson) wanted to know was this—supposing that that gallant Admiral had had the whole of our naval force increased, or even doubled, according to his wishes, what would he have done with it? To what purpose was the existing naval force applied? What was the use of such large establishments on foreign stations during peace between this country and foreign States? A few facts might demonstrate to the House its excess. On the 1st of March, 1848, we actually had 31 ships of war, manned by 8,337 men, on the Mediterranean station alone. He would ask what possible object was to be effected by maintaining this large armament in the Mediterranean? Did it ensure us more trade? What protection did it afford—did the knowledge that we had all those ships of war in those waters enable our merchant ships in the Mediterranean to enter any port of Italy or France on better conditions than the shipping under any other flag? Did English shipping enter those ports under any greater advantages than those which were extended to the merchant vessels of Hamburg, of Bremen, or of Lubeck? Or was the presence of such large armaments under our flag in the Mediterranean necessary to protect our merchantmen from the attacks of pirates? Were there any pirates in those seas? He believed there were none. But if there were, would these line-of-battle ships be capable of running into the creeks and ports to which only the pirate vessels would resort to protect themselves from pursuit? These were not at all the class of shipping adapted either to the protection of our commerce from piracy, or by which pirates could be effectively attacked. But in the Pacific ocean, and on the south-eastern coast of America, we had a large increase in our force. In the one quarter we had fourteen, and in the other twelve, ships of war. ["No, no!"] Yes, altogether we had 26. He had purposely given the largest number, because, although at one time there were only 17 or 18 ships upon these stations, he was including the reliefs which were absolutely necessary to be supplied to them, and which should therefore be comprised in the estimate of the whole force required for the two stations which were now divided (though they had formerly been one), of the Pacific and the south-eastern coast of America, namely, 26 ships, with 4,200 men. Now, what were all these ships there for? It had been admitted by a gallant Admiral that he did not see why so many were required on the Pacific station; and the late Lord Auckland had said in the Committee, when examined, that if all the various questions respecting the Oregon, Tahiti, and Mexico, were settled, and the causes of the great increase on these stations thus removed, there could be no objection to return to the same establishment which we maintained there in 1835. Here, again, was an approximation to the spirit of the principle which had been advocated by the hon. Member for the West Riding, namely, that when wars and rumours of wars, which had given rise to such additions to our armaments, had passed away, those armaments should be reduced to the condition at which they would have stood under ordinary circumstances. Such was the proposition of his hon. Friend the Member for the West Riding, and such were the dictates of common sense. He could not understand what object of public interest was promoted by this large Pacific squadron. Was Chili or Peru going to make war upon us? What country was there in those latitudes which menaced British interests or British commerce? Not only was there not a single enemy to cope with us, but no ground of justification for such a force. Hon. Gentlemen seemed to rely for their justification of the scale on which our naval force was maintained, on that at which France kept up her squadrons; but facts would not bear them out, as the French naval force was far less than ours. But if France chose to rush into the expenses of a foolish and extravagant establishment, utterly beyond that which was warranted by the necessity of the case or the aspect of affairs, that was no reason why we should follow her bad example. When our commerce should be seriously threatened, it would be time enough to make the increase in our naval armaments. It would be for us to await events, but let us not in the mean time die out of mere fear of death. The expense of armaments, as far as taxation was concerned, was ruinous to all the interests of the nation, and most disastrous to the prosperity of commerce. They had heard a great deal about the necessity of regulating their expenditure, and especially that of their Navy, by the expenditure of foreign nations for the same objects. There was also some speculative apprehensions lest foreign armaments should be used for the purpose of some sudden attack, and it was said we ought to be prepared to meet them. A comparison had been drawn between the number of our own ships and officers and those maintained by France, and other countries, and it was argued that we must maintain our force on the same footing and establishment as France maintained hers. But did the House know what was the establishment in these respects which was kept up by France and the United States? Did the House consider what was the actual relative expenditure of these establishments in these States, compared with the charge upon our own revenue? And now a few words as to the relative number of officers in the naval service of those countries. He had carefully compared the French navy list with that of England, and he found that in the French navy there was but one full admiral; in the English there were 31. In France there were 10 vice-admirals; in England 45. In France the rear-admirals were 20; in England 72. The French navy had 100 captains; the English 554. There were 200 French commanders; 876 English; and whilst on the navy list of France there were 600 lieutenants, on our own there were 2,353. So that while 981 officers in France were all that was required to take care of her navy, and protect the interests of her commerce, more than 3,931 were required to take care of our own. But did the House know what was the complement of officers in the United States' navy? What would they say when they understood that the United States navy did not maintain one admiral, whilst we had 150; that they had no vice-admiral, no rear-admiral, and that their establishment consisted of 67 captains, 47 commanders, and 327 lieutenants. The excess of our own establishments was felt in the charge not only of our effective force but, also in our ineffective force; and this was, or should be, a material item for the consideration of the House. He was at a loss to understand why Her Majesty's Government should hitherto have confined the reductions both in Army and Navy to the reduction of the men, and not of officers. He considered that whatever might be the extent of reductions determined on in establishments, the complement, whether of regiments or ships, should be carefully maintained. Reduce regiments, but not their complements, reduce the number of ships, but not the effective strength of their crews. He neither wished to see regiments that were retained crippled to a degree of inefficiency, nor crews cut down to a scale incompatible with the proper working of the ships. Get rid, he would say, of some of these unnecessary excesses of your establishments prospectively, but get rid of them by ships and regiments. The economy resulting from reductions in our armaments, by paying off ships and placing them in ordinary, and by reducing regiments altogether, would be much larger and much safer than by retaining them on reduced establishments. He remembered that at the beginning of the present Session he had brought forward a Motion to reduce the length of speeches; and though he should be sorry to offend against his own principle, he was anxious to give expression to the sentiments he entertained on the Motion of his hon. Friend. The right hon. Member for Stamford (Mr. Herries) had taunted them with lukewarmness and languor in supporting his hon. Friend the Member for the West Riding. He could tell that right hon. Member that he gave to his hon. Friend's Amendment his most cordial and conscientious support. He did not think the proposition either a wild or a visionary one. His hon. Friend did not ask the House to carry it out either this day or within this year. He only asked them to affirm that their present expenditure was excessive. He did not ask them to reduce their establishments below the scale necessary for the protection of their commerce, but within limits compatible with the future safety of the country. He asked them to affirm nothing that was impracticable, but to put the country in that condition of financial security under which alone she could be safe in the event of foreign invasion or foreign aggression; for to proceed under the same excessive expenditure we were now incurring, would subject us to imminent danger. He entreated the House to reflect whether it would be possible for us to face great exigencies, and the additional demands they would impose on the people, with an expenditure to start from, the aggregate of which, at this moment, was little short of 60,000,000*l.* He should recollect that in 1793 they commenced an enormous expenditure from very small beginnings. Let them take care. If they were, at a moment's notice, called upon to make a great national effort, were they sure that a nation taxed up to sixty millions, in a time of profound peace, would readily respond to the call? Since the passing of the Reform Bill, the people had obtained some power in that House; and it was not at all certain that if Government proposed to make a great national effort, the people would as readily as formerly permit them to do it. In his opinion, financial strength was of more importance in case of sudden danger than any empty parade of military or naval armaments. He believed that a knowledge on the part of foreign countries that our finances were in a prosperous condition—that taxation was not wound up to its utmost pitch—that a great addition might on an emergency be made to our burthens—would have more effect in preventing invasion or any other description of offensive hostility than any mere demonstration of ships in commission, or of regiments on the war establishment. What was the value of a great number of ships or of regiments, if foreign nations could say, "They are taxed up as high as they can bear, so high that they will not go to war. Their demonstration is all a sham." ["Oh, oh!"] He believed that that was our real position in the eyes of foreign nations. He believed that the present feeling over the greater part of Europe was, that with a debt of eight hundred millions round our necks, and our other large expenditure, we were unable to undertake a great war. Was the present amount of taxation no argument, when considering our capability of meeting an emergency? Would hon. Members deny that, last year, when Ministers asked for an addition of two per cent on the income tax, they were met with an universal no, even from the agricultural and conservative Members. They had not the same House of Commons as formerly, nor had the Executive the same power of creating an addition to the income; and therefore it would be prudent in them to husband their resources in time of peace, to leave as large an amount of money as possible in the pockets of the people to fructify. The effect of this would be to create a large amount of trade, to give you an increased number of merchant ships, and consequently of sailors to man your future navies, more manufacturing establishments and engineers to prepare your war-steamers, should you require them; while if their energies were exhausted in time of peace, there would be no margin left for any great or continuous effort in time of war. Before he sat down he must call the attention of the House to one important deficiency in all the Ministerial statements they had heard of national armaments, and of our state of preparation against war. They were told of what British dockyards could do, and of what foreign dockyards could do, but they were never told of what the private shipyards of this country could do in case of emergency. Why, for his part, he would rather rely upon the private dockyards, provided there was money to pay them, than he would upon the national dockyards. They had no estimate of power, which was always increasing in time of peace. He contended that, in estimating the means of fitting out a naval armament, that credit should be given for the power possessed by the private manufacturers in this country of fitting out steam ships, and everything else that related to steam warfare. But that had not been considered. Steamers had been built far outnumbering those of foreign Powers, while at the same time we had more sailing ships, large and small, than any other country in the world. Our sailing ships had been kept up without any reference to the increased efficiency of our steam navy, or how far the latter might be used as a substitute for the former. Even the hon. Secretary for the Admiralty (Mr. Ward), in enumerating the number of sailing ships in commission during the last ten years, had never inquired in how far their places might be filled by steamers. He called upon the House, before it ventured to treat lightly the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for the West Riding, to remember that propositions such as his, when first propounded, were generally looked upon as visionary, but afterwards came to be received in a different spirit. His hon. Friend had enumerated specialties; he (Mr. Gibson) entreated the House to go into those specialties, and to see whether they did not furnish hopes of a reduction of permanent expenditure; and he did hope, connected as he was with agriculture, that the leaders of the agricultural party would not turn their backs on what was sure to give relief to their constituents. His belief was, that agriculture and manufactures were equally interested in the success of the present Motion, and that his hon. Friend the Member for the West Riding had, in proposing it, no object in view other than the interests and welfare of all classes of the community.

Mr. GRENVILLE BERKELEY wished to correct one statement which had been made by the right hon. Member for Manchester. Sir T. Hardy was not a Member of the Government in 1835.

Mr. MILNER GIBSON had said, that before Sir J. Graham left the Admiralty in 1834, Sir T. Hardy was a party to all his reductions. That was to say, to all the arrangements for 1835, which that night they had heard, left the Navy in a state of absolute destitution.

Mr. URQUHART did not wish it to go forth that those who should vote for this resolution were the only friends to retrenchment. He himself was a longer advocate for retrenchment than the hon. Mover, and went further. He went further than any man in that House, and yet he could not vote for the resolution. The Manchester school founded its economy on general theories of an Utopian nature: he founded his on the knowledge that the so-called defences of England were her only danger. That school was economical to save money: he wished to be economical not only to save money, but to pay off debt. The right hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. M. Gibson) had assured the House that he did support the Member for the West Riding. The declaration was needed. He recollected having seen on the occasion of the propounding of the present budget at Manchester, the right hon. Gentleman following it up by a resolution which was the most contradictory that any man could have devised, namely, "that no permanent reduction was practicable until there was a change in the constituency of the House of Commons." The one hon. Member proclaimed a budget—the other moved a resolution to contradict it. When he saw two such propositions jostling in the same door, and issuing from the same factory, it became him, if he had never considered the matter before, to look to the character and the motives of the projectors, and, giving them credit for sense, if not for wisdom, he did come to the conclusion that this movement was not sincere. The right hon. Gentleman below him (Mr.

Herries) had commented on the discrepancy between the tone and language of the hon. Mover (Mr. Cobden) out of the House and in it; but he had failed to note the purpose of the difference. It appeared to him (Mr. Urquhart) that there was there the same purpose as in all the other parts of this agitation—a false impression to be produced on one side, and disgust for reduction on the other; so that the agitation should at once be got up and kept within manageable bonds. The disgraceful exhibition of hired patriotism which had been made on the other side of the Channel, was now to be repeated here. His hon. Friend (Mr. Hume) had told them that he had himself moved in an unreformed House resolutions for reductions which were unanimously carried. The House that had changed this course and sanctioned extravagance was the reformed House. The men who had supported the public armies which had been so costly were the popular and liberal Members opposite. How, then, could the hon. Mover (Mr. Cobden) exclaim, "Perish the aristocracy," that we may have retrenchment. He could not be ignorant; he could not be mistaken; he then had a purpose. The manner of introducing this Motion was as objectionable as the purpose. He would leave that point as stated by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Herries; he could not consent to adopt some particular year as a standard, and a certain lump as the economy to be made; this was a compound of those empiricisms which constituted the staple of the Manchester school. The way to deal with the case was to call upon the Government in the terms of the report of the Committee of 1817, to propose to the House its number of men and ships, and then to require the House to do what it had so long neglected—to "judge in its wisdom" of the great proposal. Why did not his hon. Friend (Mr. Hume) take that course—he who had financial traditions, who, at least, was no hired agitator—why did he allow so grave a question as this to fall into such hands? He (Mr. Urquhart) would render him his most strenuous support if he would, in some such manner, bring forward the measure, now so objectionable and embarrassed with assertions, which the hon. Member's own speech disproved. His principal object in rising had been to reiterate a contradiction often given to a misrepresentation which it pleased the hon. Member for the West Riding to repeat that night. The pamphlets he had written in 1835 contained no such idea as that which the hon. Gentleman stated; so far from speaking of invasion from Russia, he had represented her as physically weak and contemptible—as dangerous, indeed, but not by the invasions of her armies, but by other means. He had shown that whenever there was in England a Minister worthy of his post by knowledge and integrity, that Russia would at once become innocuous, as England had, by commerce alone, the means of entirely paralysing her power. There could be no mistake. This had been asserted over and over again, and in a great variety of forms: it was perfectly notorious. This had been recently again explained, and reasserted to the hon. Gentleman, yet he persevered in his misrepresentations, and must have, as in the other case, a purpose. The first increase of our armaments did take place in 1835, and Russia was the object; but it was not as resisting an invasion—it was on the pretext of resisting her pretensions elsewhere, in Poland. No fruit came—Russia was not curbed by our armaments, but advanced to the accomplishment of her ends by those who pretended to arm against her. Here was a legitimate ground of attack for the hon. Gentleman; but this he studiously avoided, and created another which should not disturb the real source of the evil he pretended to attack. He could not sit down without referring, though with the greatest deference, to maxims he had heard with surprise that night, respecting the Finance Committee. The right hon. Gentleman below him (Mr. Herries) had expressed disappointment at finding on the close of last Session that that Committee had considered itself debarred from entering into the "policy of the armaments," and had confined itself to the details. He (Mr. Urquhart) was so far grateful to them. He believed he was sustained by the highest authorities in saying, that that was a matter far too grave for any Committee to undertake, and for that House under any circumstances to delegate. It had long neglected that duty, and he trusted it would be the task of some Member of greater experience, ability, and weight, than himself, to urge upon it the resumption of that essential function.

Mr. MACGREGOR would at all times give a practical vote on an economical question, and if he could vote with the hon. Member for the West Riding on the principle of economical reform with reference to taxation, he should do it. But he would not take the year 1835, or any other year, for his guide for taxation and expenditure. He could not go so far as to say that at the present time it would be practicable to reduce the expenditure of the country to the extent of ten millions. He looked to the expenditure of the Army and the Navy and Ordnance as offering the best field for reduction. The Army and Navy could not be very greatly reduced all at once, but he believed a great diminution of expenditure in the Ordnance might take place. He agreed with the hon. Member for the West Riding of Yorkshire as far as a reduction of the Ordnance charge was considered. He agreed also with the hon. Member for the West Riding in everything he had said respecting the colonies, and went so far as to contend that if we could not preserve the Canadas without a garrison of 4,000 men, we could not keep them at all. The fact was, we must retain them by good government, or lose them altogether. There were 2,000,000 of inhabitants, with 120,000 militia, every man of which would turn out if occasion warranted. How, then, was it possible to maintain those colonies with a force of 4,000 men? The same would apply to our other colonies in Australia and elsewhere. One suggestion he would throw out with respect to the troops sent to our colonies, and that was, that instead of their being brought back at the end of their term, those troops should get the option of remaining and settling in the colony. With regard to the taxation of the kingdom, he contended it was more burdensome than the taxation of any other country in the world. England and Scotland paid twice as much in taxation in proportion to any other country. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had attempted to make some considerable reductions in the Ordnance estimates; but reductions were much more easy to propose than to carry into effect. He believed that the public expenditure might be reduced some 6,000,000*l.* or 7,000,000*l.*; but this could not be done all at once. When we were on the plan of reducing the expenditure in particular departments, he much regretted we did not take proper steps to reduce taxation throughout the kingdom. He thought the constabulary and army expenses ought to be reduced, or at least that Ireland ought to sustain those charges; for he was satisfied the people of England and Scotland would not consent much longer to be taxed for such purposes. Then, with reference to the navigation laws, if we wanted to enable British ships to compete with those of other countries, we must make reductions in all articles necessary for the building of ships. He would vote with the hon. Member for the West Riding on the principle of economy in the public expenditure, and with the view to a revision of taxation, but not because of a particular expenditure or amount of taxation in 1835 or any other year. With these remarks, he trusted he should be justified in voting with his hon. Friend, and he should do so on principle. He looked forward to the reductions which might be made on entirely practical and safe grounds.

Mr. ANSTEY contended that the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the West Riding meant this, that before the House went into a Committee of Supply, it would pledge itself to a present reduction of 10,000,000*l.* ["No!"] Yes, that was the effect of the Amendment, if it had any meaning at all. Since the Reform Bill they were told the expenditure of the country had increased to a degree of profligacy never before known; and, therefore, hon. Gentlemen opposite called for more Parliamentary reform. Those hon. Gentlemen—and the hon. Member for Montrose in particular—should remember, that in all the events since the Reform Bill, by which the national expenditure had been so increased, they had been parties. They had given their sanction and approval to the passing of measures which had tended to induce that profligate expenditure of the public money which they now so indignantly repudiated. They had supported the Minister in his interference in Spain by a mercenary army—they had supported the war with China, which was sanctioned by the House by a majority of ten only, in opposition to the Motion of the right hon. Member for Ripon (Sir J. Graham), denouncing it. They, too, it was who sanctioned the war with the Affghans, in order to shower plaudits down on the head of the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Control. And again, in the case of the Syrian war—that calamity would never have taken place if the "Liberals" had done their duty, and, joining with the Conservatives, had upheld ancient treaties, and maintained, in concert with France, the freedom, peace, and independence of Turkey. The question the House had now to consider was, whether, in the present state of the world—placed as it was by the mad, mischievous, and cowardly policy of the so-called "Liberals"—we could afford to reduce the war establishments to the limits which those hon. Gentlemen now thought fit to prescribe? He did not think such a reduction safe or possible. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had quoted statistics; but on a comparison of that which he knew with that which he did not know, and judging by the falseness of the first of the inaccuracy of the rest, he was bound with hon. Gentlemen at both sides of the House—with the exception of the small and miserable majority of the Manchester school—to oppose the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Member for the West Riding had given a very inaccurate description of the pamphlet written by the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Urquhart); for so far from leading the people of this country to suppose they had anything to fear from Russia, he distinctly told them that Russia was physically the weakest Power in the world, and that we had nothing to fear from her even if we interfered to prevent the extirpation of Poland. These were some of the statistics of the public life of the hon. Gentleman, and from the falsehood of these the House might rightly conclude the falsehood of all the rest. For these reasons he would give his vote against the Amendment.

Colonel SIBTHORP had no reliance on the assertions or the conduct of either the hon. Member for the West Riding, who brought forward the Motion, or of the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who opposed it. He should feel it his duty to oppose the Motion of the hon. Member (Mr. Cobden), but vote with Her Majesty's Government he could not. He looked upon the Motion as a snake in the grass, but he was determined it should not bite him. Having no confidence either in the Motion or the opposition to it, he should abstain altogether from voting, and leave the House.

Mr. BRIGHT rose: He said, I should be sorry to detain the House longer on this occasion, were it not that I feel that no fitting reply has yet been given to some of the observations which have fallen from the other side of the House, and that I consider the subject is of that importance that we may well be excused for spending one night upon it. The right hon. Member for Stamford (Mr. Herries) has read us a lecture. It is quite evident that out of doors agitation is not palatable to him, and yet he has found fault with the quietness which has reigned during this debate in this House. The right hon. Member may possibly have received no stimulus from his constituency on the subject of reform in the taxes and expenditure of the country. He alluded to what had been said by my hon. Friend at Manchester, and spoke of what he had addressed to parties whom he described as "some people down there," by which he referred to some thousands of respectable taxpaying people of this country assembled in the free-trade hall of Manchester. Well, now, we have heard occasionally of the constituents of the right hon. Gentleman. The last thing we heard of them was this, that a considerable portion of them petitioned this House to be relieved from the privilege, or duty, or burden of their enfranchisement, because the borough the right hon. Gentleman represents was not a free borough, but was under the power of a noble Member of the other House of Parliament. Now, I may inform the House that the Member for the West Riding, my Colleague (Mr. Gibson), and myself, sit here as representing a great many thousands of electors; and those electors, on this question, I am bound to say, do most accurately represent the feelings of a vast majority of that dense population among whom they live; and, therefore, the right hon. Gentleman will excuse us if we think this question not only important in itself, but important also because of the vast interests that we feebly, it may be, but honestly, represent here. The right hon. Gentleman brought forward a great many papers, but, nevertheless, wished to make it appear that he delivered himself of an impromptu speech, the object of which was to show that my hon. Friend the Member for the West Riding was wrong about France. My hon. Friend did not say what was imputed to him. The simple fact he had in view was, not to prove that we were taxed more heavily or more lightly than France, but to dispute the notion that a republican government in France, against whom you have been bringing various charges, had succeeded in imposing a greater amount of taxation than is imposed in this country, though we have had no such convulsion as they had there. But I should like the right hon. Gentleman to go to another country. We ought not absolutely to regulate our politics or our expenditure by any other country under heaven. If we do not understand our own business, I fear, although we may see something better in other countries, we shall not be competent to practise it. But go to a country where our own race is governing itself, under institutions which carry out in practice that which is the theory of the constitution of this country. I think the right hon. Gentleman made some allusion to America. We have heard during the progress of the discussions upon this question, that the increase of population from 1835 to 1849, is no small reason why there should be some increase in our expenditure. That would be a very valid argument, if it were the duty of Government to feed and clothe the people; but as the Government only professes to govern the people, I doubt the strength of the argument. I have, however, a memorandum here, which I have taken from a work that it would be well if hon. Members would all read; it is written by Mr. Mackay, of the English bar, and is entitled *The Western World*, a book which every person may read with profit. The memorandum I have taken from it is on the special subject of the expenditure in America and in this country. It appears that from 1832 to 1836, the annual average expenditure of the United States was 21,000,000 of dollars; and that, in the four years ending in 1846, in was 22,000,000 of dollars. In 1835 the population was 15,000,000; in 1845 it was 20,000,000; so that while the population of the States had increased by thirty-three per cent, the expenditure of the federal Government had not increased more than 4 per cent. But the right hon. Gentleman pointed to the state of taxation in America. Let me refer him to the taxation of the State of New York. The whole taxation of that State—its contribution to the general Government and its State taxation—does not amount to more than 11*s.* per head of its population. Why, your expenditure last year, exclusive of your national debt and civil service, and inclusive only of your Army, Navy, and Ordnance, amounted to more than 11*s.* per head of the population of the United Kingdom. You cannot help these comparisons being drawn, and I must say they are most unfortunate and unfavourable to the institutions of this country, and to the management and patriotism of the two Houses of the Legislature. But, now, the whole of the State taxes, throughout the United States, do not amount to more than two millions per annum, and that, added to the four or five millions of the general Government taxation, amounts to an insignificant sum as compared with the taxation of the people of this country. But look at another circumstance. See how the seaboard of America has extended, and see how little it has entailed of increase in their naval expenditure. Not many years ago, their only seaboard was on the Atlantic from the Bay of Fundy to the St. Mary's, north of Florida. Now, it has passed the peninsula of Florida, and extended itself along the north of the Gulf of Mexico to the Rio Grande. On the Pacific, too, they have now an extended seaboard from the Straits of Fuca, or from the northern point of American Oregon to the southern point of Upper California. Notwithstanding this, their navy is not permitted to increase in force and cost. Besides, the American commerce has increased. Their ships are in your ports, and in all the ports of the Mediterranean and the East; but any Chancellor of the Exchequer in America would expect to be laughed at if he stated what our Chancellor of the Exchequer uttered to-night—that there was a great field opened in the East for the employment of our naval force. Why, of course, you have great fields, if you will direct your captains into those seas; but there is no American merchant whose ship, and freight, and crew are not as safe in any port of the world as the ship, freight, and crew of any merchant trading from this country. The Chancellor of the Exchequer did not give a very novel reply to the arguments of my hon. Friend. He said that the expenditure of those immense sums by which we maintain our colonies, enables us to obtain supplies of raw materials. But do we get any more wool from Australia because we have soldiers there? Or, would we get any more cotton from the United States, or any less, if we had not a fleet on that coast? Or, would not corn flow to this country from every part of the globe, although we may not have ships abroad? It is a delusion. The right hon. Gentleman is either deceived himself, or, which I do not believe, he is trying to deceive the House, when he says that this large navy you keep afloat enables you to bring large supplies of those raw materials, and that though the expenditure may appear heavy, and you grumble at it, yet that it is comparatively cheap when you consider the great advantages you receive from it. And the right hon.

Gentleman slipped by one argument my hon. Friend (Mr. Cobden) made use of, for he said we cannot do without those forces if we maintain the colonies, and if we are to keep up a rotation of troops to India. But it is a monstrous thing that this country should send out thousands of men to India to keep them there, if they live, which they seldom do, for 25 years; and a man has just reason to complain of it, especially if he did not enlist with a knowledge of the fact. Why are 9,000 men in Canada at this moment? We are now paying a larger number of soldiers in Canada than the whole standing army of the United States of America; and to me it appears a most absurd and destructive line of policy that we should sustain an army there at the expense of this country. And so I might go on to speak of New Zealand, the Cape, and other colonies. So long as this army are paid out of the taxes of the people of this country, so long will you have no security that there will not be wars between the tribes and the colonists, because it is of importance to the colonists that English troops should be there, and English money scattered among them. The Chancellor of the Exchequer will, no doubt, be supported by many hon. Members on this side of the House; but I beg to remind those Gentlemen that they voted with the Government last year, and that at the end of the Session the Government did what at the beginning of the Session they declared that they were unable to do. It may be so again. The Government will, at the end of this Session or the next, come down and make further improvements and reductions, and then they will be dragging their supporters through the mire. Now, soon or late, they just do that which the country says they shall do. The question with the Chancellor of the Exchequer is how much he will lop off that will take the edge off the agitation out of doors. When the present movement out of doors becomes more universal and combined, then he will reduce, one, two, three, four, five, or even the ten millions my hon. Friend (Mr. Cobden) asks for. It is a question of pressure, and he knows it well—no one better. Now, the question that we ask you to consider seriously is, that you diminish the expenditure to the greatest possible limit. We do not ask you now to square off 10,000,000*l*., but we do ask you to consider from whence you came, whom you profess to represent, and what is the opinion of your constituents about this question. The right hon. Member for Stamford is a leader of the protectionist party. It is a triumvirate now; I believe the government of that party is now in commission; but the right hon. Member for Stamford will support the hon. Member for Buckingham's Motion for granting relief to the agriculturists. Well, who has not seen the reports of numerous meetings in the southern counties, where agricultural distress is most felt, owing to the deficiency of the harvests, and the inferiority of the produce for the last year. What have the farmers said? They are escaping from their old leaders, who met at 17, Old Bond-street, the other day, and who could not come to any conclusion, finished with a wrangle, and adjourned to the 6th or 7th of March. I hope on the next occasion they will be able to tell the farmers something. But do not tell them that we are in fault. We never played the farmers false. You told them that the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth was pledged to support the corn laws. We always told them he was not—that he would repeal them. He repealed them because he happened to be Prime Minister, but any other Premier must have done the same. The farmers are now becoming in favour of free trade all over the country, and they ask for a reduction of taxation, and particularly of the malt tax. They observe what is passing in other countries; they knew something of the expenditure in the United States; for they have found out that there is a country like America, because corn comes from it, and they compare the expenditure of that country with their own. The farmers are suffering from the circumstance that small produce and inferior quality are bringing them but low prices. But, if Gentlemen opposite represent them truly, it is their duty to press upon the Government, with us, for all practicable reduction, in order that some diminution may take place in the present enormous taxation, from which the farmers, as well as the manufacturers, are severely suffering. You vote millions here as if they were nothing, or as if every country was a California, and that gold was not produced in this country by the sweat of millions of men, who are entitled to as just and merciful a consideration of their interests as the highest and wealthiest man in Parliament. Looking to the heroic manner in which the manufacturing population have borne the miseries of the last three years, considering that this question is supported by the universal opinion of the country, and is fortified by facts and arguments which there has been scarcely an attempt to answer, I do say the question is deserving of the deepest consideration of this House, and that it is the duty of the House to go as far as it can go in reducing the expenditure, and thereby diminishing the sufferings and grievances of the people.

Mr. H. DRUMMOND remarked, that he could not recommend the farmers to be influenced by any expressions of good will towards them by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Bright), for they should remember the old saying, "We ought not to trust our enemies, even when they bring gifts." A question of this nature was to be considered not merely with reference to the situation of our own country, but to the strength and situation of other countries. The advocates, however, of diminished expenditure had entirely omitted that consideration. They had argued this question as one of finance, which was totally another subject. He found that people did in public matters what was done in private matters. When they lived in a tranquil and peaceable village, as he had some times in Cornwall and Wales, they could leave their doors open; but he was afraid that in the quiet and peaceable town of Manchester they would find it advantageous to use locks and bars. He believed that it was the character and situation of one's neighbours that induced the introduction of the precautionary measures of locks and bars. This proposition was a delusion to the farmers, if it was brought forward as a means of relieving them from their burdens. He prayed the House to bear this in mind—they had, in round numbers, thirty millions of people, that was to say, five millions of families, one million of whom consumed five times as much as all the others, another million of families consumed four times as much as the others, another million three times as much as the others, another million consumed twice as much as the others, whilst as to the last million, one half were in misery and indigence, and the other half in absolute starvation. Their taxation then ought to press upwards, as their assessed taxes did. They ought to make the pressure increase as it went upwards, as far as the highest person in the country. Their old plan of sumptuary laws was not bad in principle, although it was found to be impossible in practice. They must endeavour, however, to return to that principle as much as possible. But these new financial reformers swallowed the camel of 20,000,000*l.* levied for the payment of the public debt; that they never said a word about; but the little gnat of 18,000,000*l.* for carrying on the government of the country they could not at all tolerate. The way to diminish the burdens of the people was by promoting the employment of capital in agriculture and manufactures. It was necessary for all of them to be united upon this point—that there was no way whatever by which they could give employment to the labourer, but by increasing the capital of the employed. But these new financial reformers were using all the means in their power to diminish that capital; it was that party which domineered in that House; no matter who lived in Downing-street, there was not one Member of any Government who dared stand up for the English labourer against the foreign labourer, and every one of the free-traders was going to give employment to the foreign labourer, and discard our own English ones.

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—The House divided:—Ayes 275; Noes 78: Majority 197.

List of the AYES.

Abdy, T. N.
Acland, Sir T. D.
Adair, R. A. S.
Anson, hon. Col.
Anson, Visct.
Anstey, T. C.
Arbuthnott, hon. H.
Archdall, Capt. M.
Armstrong, Sir A.
Arundel and Surrey, Earl of
Ashley, Lord
Bagshaw, J.
Bailey, J., jun.
Baillie, H. J.
Baines, M. T.
Bankes, G.
Baring, rt. hn. Sir F. T.
Baring, T.
Baring, hon. F.
Barrington, Visct.
Bellew, R. M.
Bennet, P.
Beresford, W.
Berkeley, hon. Capt.
Berkeley, C. L. G.
Bernal, R.
Birch, Sir T. B.
Blackall, S. W.
Boldero, H. G.
Bourke, R. S.
Bowles, Adm.
Bramston, T. W.
Brand, T.
Broadwood, H.
Brockman, E. D.
Brooke, Lord
Brooke, Sir A. B.
Bruce, C. L. C.
Bunbury, E. H.
Buxton, Sir E. N.
Callaghan, D.
Campbell, hon. W. F.
Cardwell, E.
Carew, W. H. P.
Carter, J. B.
Cavendish, hon. C. C.
Cavendish, hon. G. H.
Cavendish, W. G.
Chichester, Lord J. L.
Christy, S.
Clements, hon. C. S.
Clerk, rt. hon. Sir G.
Clive, hon. R. H.
Cocks, T. S.
Colebrooke, Sir T. E.
Coles, H. B.
Compton, H. C.
Conolly, T.
Cowper, hon. W. F.
Craig, W. G.
Crowder, R. B.
Cubitt, W.
Currie, H.

Davie, Sir H. R. F.
Davies, D. A. S.
Deedes, W.
Dick, Q.
Disraeli, B.
Dod, J. W.
Douglas, Sir C. E.
Duckworth, Sir J. T. B.
Duff, G. S.
Duncuft, J.
Dundas, Adm.
Dundas, Sir D.
Dundas, G.
Dunne, F. P.
Du Pre, C. G.
Edwards, H.
Egerton, W. T.
Ellice, right hon. E.
Elliot, hon. J. E.
Enfield, Visct.
Farnham, E. B.
Farrer, J.
Ferguson, Col.
Ferguson, Sir R. A.
Fitz Patrick, rt. hn. J. W.
Floyer, J.
Foley, J. H. H.
Forester, hon. G. C. W.
Forster, M.
Fortescue, C.
Fox, R. M.
Fox, S. W. L.
Fuller, A. E.
Glyn, G. C.
Gooch, E. S.
Gordon, Adm.
Goulburn, rt. hon. H.
Grace, O. D. J.
Graham, rt hon. Sir J.
Granby, Marq. of
Greene, T.
Grenfell, C. P.
Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.
Grey, R. W.
Guest, Sir J.
Haggitt, F. R.
Halford, Sir H.
Harcourt, G. G.
Harris, hon. Capt.
Hawes, B.
Hay, Lord J.
Hayter, rt. hon. W. G.
Heald, J.
Heathcoat, J.
Heathcote, G. J.
Heneage, E.
Heneage, G. H. W.
Henley, J. W.
Herbert, H. A.
Herbert, rt. hon. S.
Herries, rt. hon. J. C.
Hervey, Lord A.
Hildyard, R. C.
Hobhouse, rt. hon. Sir J.
Hobhouse, T. B.
Hodges, T. L.
Hollond, R.
Hood, Sir A.
Hope, Sir J.
Hope, A.
Hornby, J.
Hotham, Lord
Howard, Lord E.
Howard, hon. C. W. G.
Jervis, Sir J.
Johnstone, Sir J.
Jolliffe, Sir W. G. H.
Jones, Capt.
Keppel, hon. G. T.
Kildare, Marq. of
Labouchere, rt. hon. H.
Langston, J. H.
Lascelles, hon. W. S.
Legh, G. C.
Lennard, T. B.
Lewis, rt. hon. Sir T. F.
Lewis, G. C.
Lincoln, Earl of
Lindsay, hon. Col.
Locke, J.
Lockhart, A. E.
Lockhart, W.
Lowther, H.
Macnaghten, Sir E.
Macnamara, Maj.
Mahon, The O'Gorman
Mahon, Visct.
Maitland, T.
Mandeville, Visct.
Manners, Lord G.
Marshall, W.
Martin, C. W.
Masterman, J.
Matheson, A.
Matheson, Col.
Maule, rt. hon. F.
Maxwell, hon. J. P.
Melgund, Visct.
Miles, P. W. S.
Miles, W.
Mitchell, T. A.
Monsell, W.
Moody, C. A.
Morison, Sir W.
Mostyn, hon. E. M. L.
Mulgrave, Earl of
Napier, J.
Newdegate, C. N.
Newport, Visct.
Norreys, Lord
Norreys, Sir D. J.
Nugent, Sir P.
O'Brien, Sir L.
Ogle, S. C. H.
Ossulston, Lord
Owen, Sir J.
Paget, Lord C.
Paget, Lord G.
Palmer, R.
Palmer, R.
Palmerston, Visct.
Parker, J.
Patten, J. W.
Peel, rt. hon. Sir R.
Peel, Col.
Peel, F.
Pennant, hon. Col.
Pigot, Sir R.
Pinney, W.
Plowden, W. H. C.
Plumptre, J. P.
Power, N.
Price, Sir R.
Prime, R.
Pryse, P.
Pugh, D.
Reid, Col.
Repton, G. W. J.
Ricardo, O.
Rice, E. R.
Rich, H.
Richards, R.
Robartes, T. J. A.
Roche, E. B.
Romilly, Sir J.
Rumbold, C. E.
Rushout, Capt.
Russell, Lord J.
Russell, F. C. H.
Rutherfurd, A.
Sandars, G.
Sandars, J.
Seymer, H. K.
Seymour, Lord
Shafto, R. D.
Sheil, rt. hon. R. L.
Shelburne, Earl of
Sheridan, R. B.
Simeon, J.
Slaney, R. A.
Smith, J. A.
Smith, M. T.
Smyth, J. G.
Smythe, hon. G.
Somerville, rt. hn. Sir W.
Spearman, H. J.
Stafford, A.
Stansfield, W. R. C.
Staunton, Sir G. T.
Stuart, Lord J.
Stuart, J.
Sutton, J. H. M.
Talbot, C. R. M.
Talbot, J. H.
Talfourd, Serj.
Taylor, T. E.
Tenison, E. K.
Tennent, R. J.
Thesiger, Sir F.
Tollemache, J.
Towneley, J.
Townley, R. G.
Townshend, Capt.
Trevor, hon. G. R.
Turner, G. J.
Tyrell, Sir J. T.
Vane, Lord H.
Verner, Sir W.
Verney, Sir H.
Villiers, Visct.
Vyse, R. H. R. H.
Waddington, H. S.
Wall, C. B.
Walsh, Sir J. B.
Ward, H. G.
Watkins, Col. L.
Williamson, Sir H.
Willoughby, Sir H.
Wilson, J.
Wodehouse, E.
Wood, rt. hon. Sir C.
Wortley, rt. hon. J. S.

TELLERS.
Tufnell, H.
Hill, Lord M.

List of the NOES.

Adair, H. E.
Aglionby, H. A.
Anderson, A.
Bass, M. T.
Blewitt, R. J.
Bouverie, hon. E. P.
Bright, J.
Brocklehurst, J.
Brotherton, J.
Brown, H.
Brown, W.
Clay, J.
Cowan, C.
Crawford, W. S.
Dashwood, G. H.
Devereux, J. T.
Drummond, H.
Duke, Sir J.
Duncan, G.
Ellis, J.
Ewart, W.
Fagan, W.
Fergus, J.
Fitzwilliam, hon. G. W.
Fordyce, A. D.
Fox, W. J.
Frewen, C. H.
Gibson, rt. hon. T. M.
Greene, J.
Hardcastle, J.
Harris, R.
Hastie, A.
Headlam, T. E.
Henry, A.
Heyworth, L.
Hindley, C.
Horsman, E.
Humphery, Ald.
Jackson, W.
Kershaw, J.
Lushington, C.
M'Gregor, J.
Meagher, T.
Mangles, R. D.
Marshall, J. G.
Moore, G. H.
Morris, D.
Mowatt, F.
O'Connell, J.
O'Connor, F.
O'Flaherty, A.
Osborne, R.
Pattison, J.
Pearson, C.
Perfect, R.
Pigott, F.
Pilkington, J.
Rendlesham, Lord
Reynolds, J.
Ricardo, J. L.
Salwey, Col.
Scholefield, W.
Sidney, Ald.
Smith, J. B.
Strickland, Sir G.
Stuart, Lord D.
Tancred, H. W.
Thicknesse, R. A.
Thompson, Col.
Thompson, G.

Thornely, T.
Trelawny, J. S.
Walmsley, Sir J.
Wawn, J. T.
Willcox, B. M.
Williams, J.
Wilson, M.
Wood, W. P.

TELLERS.
Cobden, R.
Hume, J.

Main Question put, and agreed to:—Supply considered in Committee:—Committee report progress; to sit again on Wednesday.

VICE-GUARDIANS OF UNIONS (IRELAND) BILL.

On the Motion of Sir W. SOMERVILLE, the House went into Committee on this Bill. The 1st Clause being read,

COLONEL DUNNE wished to know from the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Ireland, for how long a period he was going to propose the continuance of the vice-guardians?

SIR W. SOMERVILLE replied, that he proposed their continuance up to the 25th of March, 1850.

Mr. HERBERT, Mr. O'FLAHERTY, and **Major BLACKALL,** opposed their continuance for so long a period, when the Committee that was now sitting might make great alterations in the poor-law system.

MR. MONSELL proposed, that the period should be the 29th of September, 1849.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the blank be filled with the words 'twenty-fifth day of March, 1850:'"—The Committee divided:—Ayes 51; Noes 31: Majority 20.

Bill reported; consideration, with Amendments, on Wednesday.

House adjourned at One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, February 27, 1849.

MINUTES.] PUBLIC BILLS.—2^{a} Consolidated Fund.
Received the Royal Assent.—Inland Revenue; Habeas Corpus Suspension (Ireland).

PETITIONS PRESENTED. From Meath and Portarlington, for Inquiry into the Working of the Present System of the Poor Laws in Ireland.—From Maitland, New South Wales, that no Alteration may be made in the Constitution of that Colony.—From Kilmadock, Campsie, and Glasgow, against the Marriage (Scotland) Bill; also, against Registering Births, &c., (Scotland) Bill.

THE IRISH POOR LAW.

LORD STANLEY: In conformity with the notice which I gave yesterday to the noble Marquess opposite, I rise to ask of Her Majesty's Government to explain the course which they are about to pursue with regard to the amendment of the Irish Poor Law, and to state at the same time that I am unable to reconcile the course which has been adopted by the Government in this and in the other House of Parliament, on a question with regard to which, of all others, there ought to be no manner of doubt or ambiguity. By way of placing myself in order, and for the convenience of such of your Lordships as may wish to take part in the discussion of this question, I beg to move that a Message be sent to the other House of Parliament, requesting them to communicate to us the first report which has been laid upon their table by the Select Committee on the Irish Poor Law. The noble Marquess, of course, may deal with that Motion as he thinks fit. I state at once that I move it for the purpose I have stated. Your Lordships will recollect that, at the commencement of the present Session, the noble Marquess moved for the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the working of the Irish Poor Law; whether it required any amendment, and, if so, what the nature of that amendment ought to be. I stated at the time the objections which I entertained to this course being taken, though, in deference to the opinions of others, I abstained from pressing those objections to a division. But I stated that, as it appeared to me, the Government had put themselves into a dilemma, from which it was impossible to escape—that either they had made up their minds upon the subject, in which case there was no use in the inquiry, or else they had not made up their minds, in which case they were attempting to throw upon a Committee a responsibility which ought only to belong to Her Majesty's Government. But, certainly, I could not anticipate that which, if I am not mistaken, they have actually done. I hardly thought, indeed, that they could avoid one horn of the dilemma, but I did not think they had sufficient ingenuity to impale themselves upon both horns. Yet, unless I am misinformed, such has been the course which Her Majesty's Government have pursued. If Committees are appointed in both Houses of Parliament, I presume that the Committees in both would have the same object—to bring out facts which were necessary for legislation; and that, on those facts, before a measure founded on them is introduced, the Government should take the advice of Parliament. In pursuance of that view your Lordships appointed a Committee, and proceeded at once to take evidence and receive information on the subject. The Committee have had before them individuals who were personally engaged in the administration of the law. I hope the noble Marquess will forgive me if I am not quite regular in referring to what has taken place in that Committee; but the noble Marquess properly and fairly laid before the Committee certain resolutions, to which, however, he declined to pledge himself as measures on which the Government had positively concluded; but resolutions relating to a vast number of subjects connected with the Irish Poor Law, on all of which it was desirable that information should be received, and which would form a fit subject for the inquiries of the Committee. That appears, certainly, to be a reasonable and a proper course to pursue; but it is with surprise I learn that in the other House of Parliament a different course has been pursued, though it appears that in that House, as well as in your Lordships' House, a Committee has been appointed, and directed by, and to a certain extent composed of, the Members of Her Majesty's Government. We have the noble Marquess, a Member of the one Committee—we have the noble Lord the First Lord of the Treasury a Member of the other Committee. In that Committee, I understand, that resolutions similar to those which were laid on the table of your Lordships' Committee were brought forward by the noble Lord the First Lord of the Treasury—resolutions which were moved in a very different sense, and explained in a very different spirit, from those which were exhibited in your Lordships' Committee. So far from these being matters on which the Cabinet had not made up their minds, but which were matters of inquiry and investigation for the Committee, as was substantially stated by the noble Marquess in this House, it was declared by the First Lord of the Treasury that these were the resolutions which had been determined on by the Cabinet—that the Cabinet, as a body, were pledged to them—that this was the plan of the Government, and if it was not adopted by the Committee, that they would adopt it on the responsibility of Government alone, and on their responsibility would submit it to the consideration of both Houses of Parliament. A Motion was then made in the Committee by a Member not connected with Government, that before these resolutions were adopted, evidence should be taken—a course, it will be remembered, which was strictly in accordance with the recommendations of the noble Marquess in this House. But your Lordships will hardly credit the fact that this proposition, so proper in itself, and in such entire conformity with the course which has been recommended in this House by Her Majesty's Ministers—that this proposition was negatived by the Members of Her Majesty's Government in the Committee of the House of Commons, the noble Lord the First Lord of the Treasury taking the initiative in declaring that these were the resolutions of Government, on which he would permit no investigation to take place, and no evidence to be received; and by a division—in which the noble Lord the First Lord of the Treasury, the Under Secretary of State, and the Irish Secretary, voted in the majority—it was first negatived that upon such a proposition they should hear evidence; and then the Committee further negatived another proposition, that in the absence of evidence Her Majesty's Government should bring forward the resolutions on their own responsibility, Neither of these courses suited Her Majesty's Government. Before your Lordships' Committee they declare that they are not pledged to these resolutions—before the Commons they declare that they are. In the House of Lords their leader gives it as his advice that it would be a fit and proper course to take evidence—in the Commons their leader negatives a proposition to hear evidence; and the Motion to take evidence is negatived, with the support of the Members of Her Majesty's Government, and the resolutions, without evidence, are passed by the Committee. And not only that, but this resolution is reported to the House of Commons, and forms the first report of the Select Committee to the House; and the noble Lord has himself given notice that, I believe on Thursday next, he will move for a Committee of the whole House, to take into consideration this first resolution passed by the Committee of the House of Commons, with a view to found a legislative measure upon this resolution—a small part of the question on which, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Government, your Lordships' Committee are at this moment taking evidence and entering upon inquiry. Now, I must say it is difficult for me to reconcile this, either with the courtesy usually observed between this and the other House of Parliament, or with that feeling of delicacy which, with all respect for the noble Marquess, I must say would prevent the leader of a party in one House from contradicting the language used by the leader in another. This is not the time to enter upon the proposition so adopted. But there is one important point in it which it is necessary to approach with the utmost caution and circumspection—I mean the necessity of a rate in aid, an additional rate to be levied upon the solvent for the support of the insolvent parishes in Ireland. I may be personally interested in this question; but I hope your Lordships will forgive me, if I say one word with regard to it, because I have been told, with an air of triumph, that this Motion, about to be submitted to the House of Commons, is in point of fact a proposition which emanated from me.

The MARQUESS of LANSDOWNE: No, no! not at all.

LORD STANLEY: I thank the noble Marquess for his promptness in exonerating me from this imputation. I am quite certain that it is unnecessary for me to disclaim such an imputation to any one of your Lordships; but to prevent the possibility of misconception, allow me to state how the matter really stands. What I did say, speaking for myself—and I believe speaking in the name of many landed proprietors of Ireland—what I said was this, that provided we could obtain such a division of the electoral districts as would give us the control as well as the responsibility of our own property, and free us from the responsibility of other properties—provided that you remove from those districts which are absolutely pauperised, the control in the election of guardians who prove themselves altogether inefficient—provided that these things be agreed to—and provided that any sums of money advanced as a rate in aid should be considered as a loan to be repaid by those districts in a more prosperous state of their affairs, I would be willing to pay this insurance upon my property in the shape of a rate in aid to the less prosperous districts, to the extent of a shilling in the pound. But the proposition now made is to take the superstructure which I proposed to add, without taking the foundation which I felt it necessary to lay. Not one of those conditions which I specified as indispensable—and which even then I should be unwilling to adopt — not one of those propositions which I put forward, is now referred to. I must apologise to your Lordships for mentioning these matters. The noble Marquess fairly and frankly says, that he did not misunderstand me. I will not now discuss the question of a rate in aid. It is a subject to be approached with great calmness, deliberation, and forbearance; and I hope that when that proposition is raised—if ever it is so raised—I hope that it will not be raised unaccompanied with other conditions and standing by itself; for if you do, I cannot blame, I shall rather participate in the feelings of those who would give such a measure an instantaneous rejection. I think that the whole question should be at once laid before the House and the Committee—that we should know the whole extent of the subject with which we have to deal. But I earnestly hope that when it is brought forward, this measure will not be made the ground—which I am afraid there is some reason to think it may be—of mutual recrimination and angry feeling between representatives and noble Lords connected respectively with England and Ireland. I hope that those who are connected with the more prosperous districts of Ireland will not think it necessary to say, that they ought to be considered as a part of the empire at large, and that what they may be called upon to pay ought to be paid out of the British and Imperial funds. I hope that such a proposition as that will not be put forward, because, much as I wish to see England and Ireland treated as far as possible as one country, in all matters connected with legislation and taxation, it is clear that at present they are not so treated; and it would not be fair, or reasonable, or just, that the proprietors of Ireland should claim exemption from the income tax or the assessed taxes on the ground that they live in a distinct and separate country, and then that, on the ground of their community of interest, they should be entitled to impart their burdens—that they should on the one hand obtain the advantages of their separate position, and that on the other hand they should claim from their community of position that a community of burdens should be thrown upon this country. Therefore, I hope that if the other provisions of the Bill be fair and reasonable, we shall not hear of any exaggerated pretensions to escape from the burden of Irish distress; and, on the other hand, I must express my most anxious and earnest hope that the English representatives and Peers will not be led, by their impatience of taxation for Irish purposes, and by the frequent demands which are made upon them for the purposes of Irish charity, to seize upon any mode, without reference to its justice or practicability, by which they may escape from being called upon to contribute to Irish distress, and to throw the whole burden upon the whole area of Ireland. I beg to express no opinion with regard to the proposition itself; but I trust that Her Majesty's Government, if they have any intention of introducing such a measure, will reconsider the proposition which they are now disposed to make a separate question from the whole of the remainder of the questions—that if they do, they will not submit it to the consideration of Parliament in the most unfortunate manner for the attainment of their own objects, and in a manner which really will not give the Parliament a fair opportunity of judging of their measures for the amendment of the Irish Poor Law. But it is not too much to ask that the noble Marquess will either discharge your Lordships' Committee from their idle and useless investigation, or else that the rate in aid shall not be pressed in the other House of Parliament till your Lordships—from the evidence which your Committee has taken, but which the Commons are not permitted to hear—shall be satisfied whether this proposition, either standing by itself or weighed with other considerations, is of a nature to meet the necessity of the case. I beg to conclude with the Motion—

"That a Message be sent to the House of Commons, requesting them to communicate to this House a copy of the first report of their Select Committee on the Irish Poor Law."

The MARQUESS of LANSDOWNE could perfectly understand the noble Lord's intention in making the present Motion; it was, no doubt, with the view of putting a question to him, which he could assure the noble Lord he was most desirous of answering most distinctly, though, at the same time, considering that the question was at present before a Committee, not only of their Lordships' House, but also of the other House of Parliament, the noble Lord, familiar as he was with the proceedings in both Houses, would see that he could only answer with a certain degree of reserve. With respect to what might have taken place in the Committee of their Lordships' House, he had no difficulty whatever. In that Committee, as those of their Lordships who were Members of that Committee knew, he had pursued a course which he had thought perfectly consistent with the particular position of that Committee. He considered he had fulfilled his duty in laying before the Committee the substance, and the substance only, of certain propositions which he had understood had been made, or were to be made, in another place. He had not laid these suggestions before the Committee in the form of resolutions; they had been communicated by him solely as the substance of suggestions made in another place, and had not been put in the form of resolutions, for a reason obviously applicable to the position of the Committee. He was desirous that the fullest opportunity should be given to their Lordships' House of examining witnesses upon the whole subject, and thought it would have been desirable that the fullest opportunity should have been also had elsewhere; but he begged their Lordships to consider what was the different position of the two Committees. He would proceed now to do what he had already stated he should feel some difficulty in doing—namely, explaining what had taken place elsewhere; because the question of the noble Lord not only called on him, after stating the course of his own (the Marquess of Lansdowne's) conduct there, to explain the conduct of one of his Colleagues in another place, but also called on him to that which it was impossible for him to do authoritatively, though he might do it hypothetically—namely, to explain the motives of Members of the other House of Parliament acting in Committee—acting sometimes in accordance, and sometimes not in in accordance, with the suggestions of one of Her Majesty's Ministers. It was notorious — he assumed it to have been so, at least — he possessed no special information on the subject which he could lay before their Lordships; but it was believed that a proposition which had been made by one of the most distinguished of the Colleagues with whom he had the honour of acting, had been assented to by a large majority of the Committee, while there was another proposition, also submitted to the Committee, to which a majority had also given assent. It was impossible, then, for him to explain the course so taken without assuming the motives—though he was not enabled to state them positively — which might have influenced both his noble Friend and the Members of the Committee. The proposition which had been laid before one of the Committees in the form of a resolution, and which had been communicated as such in substance to the other Committee, embraced a vast variety of topics connected with the whole state of the poor-law administration in Ireland, all of which—whether the decision upon any one in particular preceded that upon the others—formed a fit subject for inquiry. In the opinion of the Committee, one of those resolutions, which appeared to have been communicated by the Committee to the other House of Parliament, and which now stood for consideration before that House, was one of immediate necessity, and, in the opinion of the Committee, intimately connected with the immediate relief of a portion of the people of Ireland from a state of the utmost and most appalling distress and destitution; and he thought it might occur to their Lordships, as it did occur to him, as a reason for that course having been taken by the Committee, that, however anxious they might have been to obtain the fullest information upon every point connected with that important subject, there was one on which there was no room for delay—namely, that one which referred to the immediate subsistence of a portion of the people within the next few months. He had no hesitation in saying, that he wished no separation had taken place between that first resolution and those which should immediately follow; and he had also no hesitation in saying, that he thought that if anything in the nature of a proposition of a rate in aid was to be entertained by Parliament, it ought to be entertained in conjunction with another, the effect of which would be to establish a maximum poor-rate in all the counties of Ireland. He considered the establishment of a maximum rate in any way that was consistent with the preservation of the lives of the people, to be an object of paramount importance; and he believed that the absence of such a maximum rate, and the uncertainty attendant upon the amount to which the poor-rate might be collected in those unions, which had been mainly dependent for their support upon the productiveness of the potato crop, and which had been ruined by its failure, were questions of the very first importance, the consideration of which should be taken in conjunction with the first efforts which their Lordships would see fit to adopt on the subject. For he was sure that he was only stating that which was consistent with the knowledge of many of their Lordships, when he said that at the present moment in that country it was impossible to let the lands which had been abandoned, except in the most objectionable form that it could be let—namely, in small allotments—and that the effect of the poor-law as it now stood, and without some ratification, was to give a direct encouragement to that which all their legislation should be directed to discourage—the infinite subdivision of land in Ireland; in other words, the first source of that mischief which their Lordships were now endeavouring to remedy. For these reasons he certainly wished that the whole of the proposition—he meant those parts which related to the rate in aid, and the maximum rate, should be joined together. He had not authority to explain the motives of the individuals composing the Committee of the other House of Parliament, who had thought it their duty to separate those parts for the purposes of immediate legislation; but he could conceive that those Gentlemen, in the absence of any further plan for the purpose of affording immediate relief, seeing the necessity of providing some remedy which should touch the existing evil, might feel themselves justified in saying that they would report upon a remedy for the pressing evil; and that with respect to the maximum rate, while not objecting to it, they would take further time to consider what that maximum would be, and to what regulations it might be subjected. He offered that, not certainly on authority, as an explanation of their motives. But, with respect to the other House, and the usual course of business there, he could not bring himself to discourage any important measures which were likely to require long and serious consideration. The inquiry which had been instituted was going on upon this very subject; and so far from there being any intention to exclude it from the consideration of the Committee of their Lordships' House, which was now sitting, every opportunity would be afforded of prosecuting the inquiry, not only with respect to every other part of the subject, but this very point also. Considering, then, the position of their Lordships' Committee, they could not be called upon for some time to come to a conclusion on the subject; while, with respect to the other, they had only dealt with one portion of the subject, which was absolutely necessary to prevent starvation. Having said this much, however, he begged to add, that he agreed in much of what the noble Lord had said on the subject of rates in aid. He saw the greatest objection to such a project, if applied to the general state of society; and he had no hesitation in taking that first opportunity which offered of expressing his opinion on this subject. He wished to state, that no consideration upon earth could have induced him to assist in carrying a measure, the effect of which should be to establish such a principle as a permanent system of relief. It was only as a temporary expedient, applied to circumstances which, perhaps, no other expedient could have met, that this measure of a rate in aid, limited in amount and limited in time, had received his support. Further than this he would not have gone; and, in agreeing to it, he trusted their Lordships would not consider that they were sanctioning a principle which, if permanently adopted, would prove most destructive to the interests not only of Ireland, but of England also—for England, also, must suffer in the end from the adoption of such a system. He had only to add, that in the discussion of the subject, both there and elsewhere, he trusted that it would be considered with that forbearance of which the noble Lord had just given so marked an example.

LORD BROUGHAM said, he had great pleasure in remarking the reluctance which his noble Friend had declared he felt in assenting to this proposition; and he hoped that further consideration would lead his noble Friend to withdraw even the scanty acquiescence which he had given. During all the discussions in Parliament on the subject, for the last twenty-five years, the impossibility had been generally admitted of maintaining a minimum rate, if the principle were once admitted. The tendency would always be to increase the minimum if the system were once adopted. As to the grant of 50,000*l.*, which was now before the other House of Parliament, he trusted that it would be the last that they should hear of. It was to be regretted that, by the absurd forms of the House, their Lordships could not object to this grant. In fact, they would probably not have the matter regularly before them until after the money would have been expended.

The MARQUESS of LANSDOWNE said, he had not the least objection to the Motion, if the noble Lord pressed it.

Motion withdrawn.

House adjourned to Thursday next.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, February 27, 1849.

MINUTES.] PUBLIC BILLS.—1° Marriages.

PETITIONS PRESENTED. By Mr. M'Gregor, from Kensington, Chelsea, Hammersmith, Fulham, and Chiswick, for Returning Two Members to Serve in Parliament for those Parishes.—By the Marquess of Chandos, from the Borough of Buckingham, against the Buckingham Summer Assizes Bill.

DUBLIN CONSOLIDATION IMPROVEMENT WATERWORKS AND SEWERS BILL.

Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to be made to Question (13th February), "That the Bill be now read a second time," and which Amendment was to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question, to add the words "upon this day six months," Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. REYNOLDS, before the adjourned debate on this Bill was resumed, begged to state, that he had received petitions from the Lord Mayor, aldermen, and burgesses of the city of Dublin; from the Grand Canal Company, under their seal; from burgesses and ratepayers of the city, 4,000 in number; from the High Sheriff of the city, and from the president and vice-president and members of the Chamber of Commerce, against it. He believed he could not take any part in the debate, as it had been adjourned upon his own Motion, that the Bill should be read a second time that day six months. He however, should, on the part of his constituency, protest against the second reading.

MR. SPEAKER said, that the hon. Gentleman undoubtedly could not take part again in the debate upon the question then before the House. But a clause had been referred to him for consideration. He had examined it, and he thought it was one which should be struck out by the Committee.

MR. J. O'CONNELL supported the Amendment, and begged the House to give due weight to what he believed to be the almost unanimous opinion of the citizens of Dublin.

The EARL of LINCOLN said, that he understood the chief reason for the adjournment of the debate upon the Bill was in order that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Ireland (Sir W. Somerville) might have time to communicate with the Lord Lieutenant, and ascertain his opinion upon the measure. He thought that the rules of the House ought to be relaxed, and the right hon. Gentleman be allowed to state the result of the communication.

MR. SPEAKER said, that that could be best done by the withdrawal of the Motion, and the substitution of another.

Mr. REYNOLDS declined to withdraw his Motion.

Question put. The House divided:—Ayes 23; Noes 39: Majority 16.

The Earl of LINCOLN pressed the Secretary for Ireland to state his reasons for allowing a private Bill such as the present one to be thrown out upon the second reading.

Sir W. SOMERVILLE said, he had been precluded by the rules of the House from stating his reasons. The division had come upon him by surprise. He was quite ready to state his reasons, but was not permitted. He would now say, that the Government was prepared to propose certain measures connected with the objects of the Bill before the House. One was with reference to a concentrated board for purposes of general taxation for the city of Dublin, and to vest in the corporation of the city the powers at present vested in several Government offices. The Lord Lieutenant was in favour of such a course; but there did not appear to be—at least at present—any chance of the several parties concerned agreeing to a general plan. There were two other Bills, the Dublin Corporation Waterworks Bill, and the Dublin Improvement Bill, fixed for Friday next, when some of the questions in debate would come before the House; but he had made up his mind to oppose the present Bill, because he found it was objected to by all parties.

Mr. SIDNEY HERBERT said, it was a mistake to suppose the Bill was opposed by all parties. He proposed that the second reading should be adjourned for a fortnight. The other Bills could be postponed to the same day, and all could then be considered together.

Mr. REYNOLDS said, the question was at an end. His Amendment had been carried.

Mr. SIDNEY HERBERT begged the hon. Member's pardon. They had only decided on striking out the word "now;" the future day on which the Bill was to be read a second time had not yet been decided. He moved as an Amendment that the Bill be read a second time that day fortnight.

Mr. REYNOLDS appealed to the right hon. Gentleman in the Chair. He had always been under the impression that a Motion such as had just been carried, postponed the reading of a Bill for six months.

Mr. SPEAKER explained that the words of the Amendment were, "to strike out the word 'now,' for the purpose of adding 'this day six months.'" The division had been taken on the omission of the word "now." The day to be substituted was a question still to be decided.

Mr. BERNAL OSBORNE recommended Mr. Reynolds to agree to the postponement for a fortnight. He had himself voted against the Bill, knowing nothing about it, but merely giving, as it were, a vote of confidence to his hon. Friend the Member for Dublin.

Mr. REYNOLDS said, the more he considered the matter, the more he was determined to persevere in his opposition to the Bill. It was a Bill concocted by a speculating attorney for the mere purpose of making up a bill of costs against his (Mr. Reynolds') constituents. And this attorney was helped by a London Parliamentary agent. Would the House, he asked, endure such a thing? Would it tolerate such a measure being thrust upon London, Liverpool, Manchester, or Birmingham? No, they would not; and yet, because the measure referred to a place at the other side of the Channel, they were asked to enable a speculating attorney to bring in a Bill which would saddle the citizens with costs to the amount of at least 10,000*l.* The right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth had said, that he was for extending all the municipal privileges enjoyed in England to Ireland. Yet the House of Commons was asked to hand over to an irresponsible board the complete command of 250,000*l.* a year, in the shape of local taxation inflicted upon the citizens of Dublin, and over the expenditure of which they were to have no control. If the Bill were even sent only before a Committee, it would put his constituents to an expense of at least 5,000*l.* to oppose it. Was that to be endured? And with regard to what had fallen from the noble Lord opposite (the Earl of Lincoln) and the right hon. Baronet (Sir W. Somerville), was it not a degradation to the citizens of Dublin, the second city in the kingdom, that their rights and privileges should be decided upon by the dictum of the Lord Lieutenant? No one respected the present Lord Lieutenant of Ireland more than he did; but that nobleman had enough on his hands without undertaking the management of the municipality of the city. As to the board proposed under the Bill, it was altogether a fiction. It included his (Mr. Reynolds') name, and that of the Lord Mayor, and of Alderman Guinness, all of whom had repudiated the scheme altogether, and he disclaimed all connexion with it.

Mr. GROGAN pressed for the adjournment of the second reading for a fortnight.

Sir W. SOMERVILLE also recommended the adjournment for a fortnight. At the same time he begged to assure the hon. Member for the city of Dublin (Mr. Reynolds) that it was not his wish that the Bill should be sent to a Committee upstairs.

Mr. REYNOLDS moved that the Bill should be read a second time that day six months.

Question proposed—"That the words 'upon this day six months' be added, instead thereof."—Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, by leaving out the words 'six months,' and adding the word 'fortnight,' instead thereof.—Question put, "That the words 'six months' stand part of the proposed Amendment."

The House divided:—Ayes 45; Noes 71: Majority 26.

List of the Ayes.

Anderson, A.
Bass, M. T.
Bellew, R. M.
Boyle, hon. Col.
Bright, J.
Brown, W.
Clay, Sir W.
Cobden, R.
Crawford, W. S.
Devereux, J. T.
Drummond, H.
Duncan, G.
Ellis, J.
Evans, Sir De L.
Fox, R. M.
Greene, J.
Grenfell, C. P.
Grey, R. W.
Harris, R.
Hayter, rt. hon. W. G.
Henry, A.
Hindley, C.
Hume, J.
Lushington, C.
M'Gregor, J.
Marshall, J. G.
Maule, rt. hon. F.
Meagher, T.
O'Connor, F.
Osborne, R.
Pattison, J.
Pilkington, J.
Salwey, Col.
Scrope, G. P.
Scully, F.
Shafto, R. D.
Stuart, Lord D.
Talbot, J. H.
Thompson, Col.
Thompson, G.
Walmsley, Sir J.
Wawn, J. T.
Willcox, B. M.
Williams, J.
Wyld, J.

TELLERS.

Fagan, W.
Reynolds, J.

List of the Noes.

Anstey, T. C.
Ashley, Lord
Bagshaw, J.
Baillie, H. J.
Boldero, H. G.
Bourke, R. S.
Bramston, T. W.
Brotherton, J.
Buller, Sir J. Y.
Campbell, hon. W. F.
Carew, W. H. P.
Cavendish, hon. C. C.
Cavendish, W. G.
Chandos, Marq. of
Christopher, R. A.
Cocks, T. S.
Cubitt, W.
Douglas, Sir C. E.
Duckworth, Sir J. T. B.
Duncombe, hon. A.
Duncuft, J.
Dundas, Adm.
Dundas, G.
Du Pre, C. G.
Ebrington, Visct.
Egerton, W. T.
Elliot, hon. J. E.
Ewart, W.
Farnham, E. B.
Farrer, J.
Fuller, A. E.
Gladstone, rt. hon. W. E.
Goulburn, rt. hon. H.
Greene, T.
Hall, Col.
Hardcastle, J. A.
Hay, Lord J.
Henley, J. W.
Herbert, rt. hon. S.
Herries, rt. hon. J. C.
Hildyard, R. C.
Hobhouse, rt. hon. Sir J.
Hope, Sir J.
Hope, H. T.
Howard, Lord E.
Jervis, Sir J.
Jones, Capt.
Lewis, rt. hon. Sir T. F.
Lincoln, Earl of
Mahon, Visct.
Maitland, T.
Mangles, R. D.
Matheson, Col.
Palmerston, Visct.
Patten, J. W.
Plowden, W. H. C.
Russell, F. C. H.
Rutherfurd, A.
Sandars, G.
Scott, hon. F.
Seymer, H. K.
Smith, rt. hon. R. V.
Somerville, rt. hn. Sir W.
Stafford, A.
Stanley, E.
Thornely, T.
Tyrell, Sir J. T.
Verner, Sir W.
Verney, Sir H.
Wall, C. B.
Wilson, M.

TELLERS.

Grogan, E.
Taylor, T. E.

Question—"That the word 'fortnight' be added, instead thereof," put, and agreed to.—Words added.—Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Bill to be read 2° on Tuesday 13th March.

ST. MARY'S, WHITECHAPEL, TITHES AND EASTER OFFERINGS BILL.

Motion made, and Question proposed—"That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. BERNAL OSBORNE opposed the second reading of this Bill. It was promoted by the remarkably suitably named corporation "Brazenose College, Oxford," for the purpose of enabling the rector of St. Mary's to receive 1,000*l.* a year out of the poor-rates. The Bill was intituled "a Bill for extinguishing the rights of the Rector," but it would have been more properly intituled, "a Bill for extinguishing the rights of the parishioners." It was an attempt to induce the House to sanction a title which was disputed, and to enforce a commutation where there was nothing to be commuted; to lay a tax upon the householders of Whitechapel, where they said there never was any right to make a demand. Far from there being even immemorial usage for such a charge, the parish had been originally part of Stepney parish, from which it was separated, and the offerings made to the rector were only voluntary. The promoters of the Bill endeavoured to make out a title, by referring to the proceedings of a select vestry meeting held in 1818, whereby

300*l.* a year had been agreed upon by the inhabitants as the income of the rector. But, recently, the collector stated the offerings to be worth only 141*l.* If such a measure were allowed to pass, it would have the effect of hindering the people from paying the poor-rates; and nothing could be more discreditable to the Established Church than to have its rectors living upon the money given for the support of the poor. He should move that the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

MR. G. THOMPSON seconded the Motion.

Amendment proposed—" To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon that day six months.' "

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE thought that a more temperate mode of discussion, one dealing less in strong language, a more fair and candid consideration of the subject, would have tended more to the coming to a fair decision upon it, than the very animated language—to use no more expressive term—indulged in by the hon. Member for Middlesex. That hon. Gentleman said that the principle of the Bill was to give to the rector of St. Mary's, Whitechapel, 1,000*l.* a year out of the poor-rates. He (Mr. Gladstone) said, that its principle was to extinguish the rights of the rector to the Easter offerings and the tithes, and to establish a fixed annual payment in lieu thereof. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Osborne) asked the House, would they pass such a Bill against the unanimous feeling of the parish, at the instance of the rector alone? But the hon. Gentleman knew very well that the parish was divided upon the subject. There was a petition in preparation, which would be presented in a day or two, signed by a large number of the most respectable inhabitants of the parish, including several Dissenters, a Dissenting clergyman, and some Jews, in favour of the Bill. He repeated, its object was to extinguish claims of a large and undefined nature, which could only be enforced by a suit in Chancery, at great expense to the rector, and at greater expense still to the ratepayers, but with the certainty of giving to the rector, finally, a very much larger income than he claimed under the Bill. [MR. BERNAL OSBORNE: Yes, supposing him to get a 2*s.* 9*d.* rate.] Yes; a 2*s.* 9*d.* rate on a rental of 96,000*l.* would produce from 12,000*l.* to 16,000*l.* a year. All he asked the House was to go into Committee to consider the propriety of a fixed income in lieu of the present disputed rate. He would not pledge himself to the particular amount at which the income shall be fixed; because that point could be arranged in Committee; but in principle he said the principle was a reasonable one. What would be the consequence if it were rejected? The parish was at present under, he thought, one of the most devoted, pious, and active clergymen that ever existed. But he was much less regardful of his temporal interests than of his spiritual; and the consequence was, that the income of the parish was dwindling away in his hands. The last payment he had received was only 490*l.*, whilst the average for the last ten years was 541*l.* But if he were to enforce his right, which was upon an extreme rate of 2*s.* 9*d.* in the pound, he would be entitled to 1,200*l.* or 1,500*l.* a year. There must be a limit to his patience and endurance. Much less would he continue his forbearance when he recollected that he was presented by the college, and that his right was a trust fund which he was bound to guard and hand down in its integrity to the future generation. The consequence would be, that if he could not enforce those rights he would resign, and another rector would be appointed, who would come in with the determination of enforcing and defending them. The parish would be obliged to go to law, and the end of it would be, that they would be obliged to pay more than 1,000*l.* a year, besides the expenses to which they would be put. He hoped that those hon. Gentlemen who were about to address the House upon the subject, would confine themselves to its merits, and not mix up their objections to the endowment of State churches with it. Whatever might be their opinions regarding the funds of the Established Church, they were public funds that ought not to be frittered away either by State or Church. He did hope, then, that a Bill like this, having for its object the simplification of the law, would receive the assent of the Legislature.

SIR W. CLAY confessed that it was with pain and reluctance that he opposed this Bill; but he was under the necessity of stating to the House that the real case was this—it was the substitution of endowment, by the will of that House, for certain legal rights. If he were asked whether he would consent to the substitution for legal claims of an arbitrary determination to take a certain sum, he was compelled to say that he could not sanction such a principle. He could wish, perhaps, that the differences existing on the question could be settled by arbitration, but he saw many difficulties in the way of such a mode of settlement.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL would venture to point out to the House the objections attaching to this measure, and also the course which he thought the House ought to pursue. It was true, as the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) stated, that under the Bill the parties concerned would be bound to pay only 1,000*l.* per annum. Yet the principle of the Bill was the substitution by the House of a certain sum in lieu of an undecided claim, and its effect would be the charging an ecclesiastical endowment upon the poor-rates. Now, many and grave objections must be entertained to the proposition for throwing on the poor-rates a charge of this description, while there would also be objections of an equally grave nature to any other rate—which must be in the nature of a church rate—being levied for the purpose. The rector did not allege that his claim was actually established; he only assumed that it was so; but even supposing such a measure founded upon such an assumption to be desirable, it ought to come before them in the shape of a general Act, extending over the whole of the city of London, and not as a private Bill, embracing only a single parish. He objected, however, to the Bill as it stood, because its very principle was to saddle the poor-rates with a claim which was not chargeable upon them; and he thought that the most satisfactory plan would be to postpone the second reading of the present Bill, for the purpose of introducing another, in which the right hon. Gentleman might distinctly state how he proposed to levy the rate for the commutation of tithes in the parish in question.

MR. GOULBURN said, that the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down, seemed hardly aware that this case was not unprecedented, or one which that House had been called upon to affirm. In the case of the Bethnal Green rectory, no longer than two years since, this principle had been affirmed. If, as suggested by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Sir W. Clay), this case were to be settled by arbitration, where could it be so well decided as before a Committee of that House? He supported the principle of this Bill, in order to enable the House to decide what ought to be the amount of compensation, and thus prevent litigation.

MR. G. THOMPSON must oppose the Bill, in compliance with the wishes of a large number of his constituents, who, however, were influenced by no personal hostility to the truly exemplary and excellent incumbent. The parishioners, who were now pursuing an inquiry into the claim of that rev. gentleman, wished the Bill to be postponed until that inquiry should have terminated, when, should the result be to establish the claim, none would be more willing than they to recognise it. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) said the Bill was brought forward with a view to prevent litigation, and save the money both of the parishioners and the incumbent; but the parishioners were not afraid of litigation. There had been litigation before in this parish, and it had always resulted in cutting down the claims of the rector, and freeing large numbers of the inhabitants from the charges sought to be made upon them. The right hon. Gentleman, when he talked of the possibility of the rector maintaining a claim of six or seven times the amount now proposed, should remember that the late rector (Dr. Matthias) never put his claim at more than 1,100*l.*, and never obtained more than 1,000*l.*

SIR E. N. BUXTON hoped the House would allow the Bill to go to Committee. He was connected with the district by business, and he considered that the claim of the rector should be commuted for a fixed sum, which could be easily settled in Committee. It was a great hardship that the rights of the rector should be allowed to lapse, because there was a difficulty in enforcing them. He was especially anxious that the present Bill should pass, because he had reason to believe that, were it to be thrown out, the present excellent rector would be obliged to resign his charge, and that another would be appointed who might be less scrupulous in asserting his rights. On that account he begged the House would allow the Bill to go before a Committee.

SIR D. L. EVANS said, the opponents of the Bill did not object to an amicable settlement, or to a settlement which should be satisfactory to the incumbent; but it should be remembered that they were now legislating for a parish, the majority of whose inhabitants were Jews or Dissenters. He suggested that the Bill should be postponed, in order to give time for an amicable arrangement between both parties. With regard to the feeling of the inhabitants, at a vestry meeting held on the 25th of January, a resolution was unanimously come to that was decidedly hostile to the Bill.

Question put, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes 70; Noes 89: Majority 19.

List of the AYES.

Acland, Sir T. D.
Anstey, T. C.
Ashley, Lord
Bailey, J.
Bailey, J., jun.
Baillie, H. J.
Beresford, W.
Boldero, H. G.
Bourke, R. S.
Bowles, Adm.
Brackley, Visct.
Bramston, T. W.
Buller, Sir J. Y.
Buxton, Sir E. N.
Campbell, hon. W. F.
Carew, W. H. P.
Chandos, Marq. of
Chaplin, W. J.
Clements, hon. C. S.
Clive, H. B.
Cochrane, A. D. R. W. B.
Cocks, T. S.
Cubitt, W.
Dodd, G.
Duncuft, J.
Du Pre, C. G.
Farnham, E. B.
Farrer, J.
Filmer, Sir E.
Forbes, W.
Fuller, A. E.
Granby, Marq. of
Greenall, G.
Greene, J.
Grogan, E.
Hall, Col.
Harris, hon. Capt.
Heneage, G. H. W.
Herbert, rt. hon. S.
Herries, rt. hon. J. C.
Hildyard, R. C.
Hogg, Sir J. W.
Hope, Sir J.
Hope, H. T.
Hughes, W. B.
Lewis, rt. hon. Sir T. F.
Lincoln, Earl of
Lopes, Sir R.
Mahon, Visct.
Mangles, R. D.
Masterman, J.
Meux, Sir H.
Miles, P. W. S.
Miles, W.
Napier, J.
O'Brien, Sir L.
Peel, rt. hon. Sir R.
Plowden, W. H. C.
Pugh, D.
Reid, Col.
Sandars, G.
Seymer, H. K.
Sidney, Aldm.
Stanley, E.
Taylor, T. E.
Tyrell, Sir J. T.
Waddington, H. S.
Willoughby, Sir H.
Wortley, rt. hon. J. S.
Young, Sir J.

TELLERS.

Gladstone, rt. hn. W. E.
Goulburn, rt. hon. H.

List of the NOES.

Anderson, A.
Bass, M. T.
Berkeley, C. L. G.
Birch, Sir T. B.
Bright, J.
Brotherton, J.
Brown, W.
Cavendish, hon. C. C.
Cavendish, W. G.
Cobden, R.
Cowan, C.
Crawford, W. S.
Davie, Sir H. R. F.
Drummond, H.
Duncan, Visct.
Duncan, G.
Duncombe, hon. O.
Dundas, Adm.
Ellis, J.
Evans, Sir De L.
Ewart, W.
Fagan, W.
Fordyce, A. D.
Forster, M.
Fortescue, C.
Fox, R. M.
Gibson, rt. hon. T. M.
Glyn, G. C.
Greene, J.
Grenfell, C. P.
Grey, R. W.
Hardcastle, J. A.
Harris, R.
Hastie, A.
Hawes, B.
Henry, A.
Heyworth, L.
Hindley, C.
Hodges, T. L.
Howard, hon. E. G. G.
Howard, P. H.
Hume, J.
Humphery, Aldm.
Jervis, Sir J.
Kershaw, J.
Lennard, T. B.
Locke, J.
Lushington, C.
M'Gregor, J.
Maitland, T.
Matheson, Col.
Moffatt, G.
Morgan, H. K. G.
Morris, D.
Mostyn, hon. E. M. L.
Mowatt, F.
O'Connor, F.
O'Flaherty, A.
Ogle, S. C. H.
Pattison, J.
Pendarves, E. W. W.
Pilkington, J.
Pinney, W.
Roche, E. B.
Romilly, Sir J.
Russell, F. C. H.
Rutherfurd, A.
Salwey, Col.
Scully, F.
Shafto, R. D.
Sheridan, R. B.
Smith, rt. hon. R. V.
Smith, M. T.
Smith, J. B.
Somerville, rt. hon. Sir W.
Strickland, Sir G.
Stuart, Lord D.
Thicknesse, R. A.
Thompson, Col.
Thompson, G.
Thornely, T.
Tufnell, H.
Wall, C. B.
Wawn, J. T.
Willcox, B. M.
Williams, J.
Wilson, M.
Wyld, J.
Wyvill, M.

TELLERS.

Osborne, R. B.
Clay, Sir W.

Words added. Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to. Second Reading put off for six months.

AUSTRIAN CLAIMS—ITALY.

MR. C. ANSTEY inquired whether it was true, as stated in the Austrian official journals, that the Envoy of Austria at the Congress at Brussels had laid it down in the basis of negotiations, that the *status quo*, as guaranteed by the Treaty of 1815, should be maintained; and, if so, whether that arrangement was to be understood to refer to the present political situation of Poland and Cracow?

VISCOUNT PALMERSTON replied, that the Austrian Government held that they were entitled to maintain that the territorial distribution settled by the Treaty of Vienna should still remain in force. There was no guarantee given by that treaty, although certain rights were established by it. As to Poland and Cracow, those who knew what had passed with reference to these States during the last two years, could answer the question of the hon. Gentleman as well as he (Viscount Palmerston) could.

SUPPLY OF ARMS TO THE SICILIANS BY ENGLAND.

MR. BANKES wished to put a question to the noble Lord the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, of some importance. Rumours were prevalent that some of the arms used by the Sicilian insurgents had been supplied from Her Majesty's stores at Woolwich or elsewhere. He wished to know whether there was any foundation for those rumours?

VISCOUNT PALMERSTON said, that no stores had been supplied at the expense of Her Majesty's Government. The fact was, that in September the contractor who was in the habit of supplying guns to the Ordnance, applied for leave to take back some of the guns he had supplied, to enable him to complete an order from the Sicilian Government. On the matter being referred to him, he (Viscount Palmerston) thought that there could be no objection to allowing the party to take back some of the arms, on the understanding that he was to furnish others in their place.

COLONIAL DESPATCHES.

MR. P. MILES wished to ask a question of the Under Secretary of the Colonies (Mr. Hawes). From information he had received, he understood that the House of Assembly in Jamaica had voted certain supplies, but that, in consequence of a clerical error as to the date of the Bill granting them, the Governor in Council refused to allow the mistake to be rectified. He (Mr. Miles) wished to know whether the Government had received any despatch on the subject; and if so, whether they would have any objection to lay it before the House? He also inquired why no blue book for 1847 had been presented to Parliament with respect to this and other colonial possessions, and should like to be informed when they would be produced?

MR. HAWES said, that the facts of the case were these: The Bill referred to by the hon. Gentleman was the Export Duties Bill; and in the course of its engrossment the word "December," 1849, was inserted instead of "February," 1849. The error was discovered and pointed out to the Governor. The Bill containing a clause enabling the error to be corrected, the Governor said he had no objection to the alteration being made. The Governor certainly had no intention to avail himself of this clerical inaccuracy; and he (Mr. Hawes) thought that he would be the last man to do so. The despatch to which the hon. Member alluded was included in a return moved for by the hon. Member for Montrose, which he hoped before long to lay upon the table of the House. With respect to the blue book on the affairs of Jamaica, he might state that a despatch had been sent out to the Governor reminding him of the omission.

MR. BAILLIE said, as the hon. Gentleman was about to present some despatches to the House, he trusted they would not be mutilated in the way in which the despatches with respect to Jamaica were. ["Order, order!"] [Mr. HUME: Put it as a question.] Well, then, he would ask whether they were likely to be mutilated in the way the other despatches had been? He held some of those despatches in his hand, and could not help observing that every particle of information contained in them had been withheld. The hon. Member here read a portion of one of the despatches to which he had referred, commencing, "I have the honour to lay before your Lordships," &c.; and, after a long blank, concluding thus—"Under all the circumstances of the case," &c. He wished to know whether the despatches would be presented entire, or whether they would be mutilated like the despatches which he held in his hand?

MR. HAWES: What is your question?

MR. BAILLIE: Whether they will be presented to the Committee without mutilation?

MR. HAWES: I think the question put by the hon. Member is a most unusual one to ask. It is calculated to excite a prejudice, which I am happy to have this opportunity of entirely repudiating. I have seen it stated more than once, by parties whom the hon. Member may know, that there have been instances in which despatches were mutilated by my noble Friend the Secretary for the Colonies (Earl Grey), for some purposes of concealment. Sir, it is utterly unfounded—altogether unfounded—that that has ever been done. It will be in the recollection of the House that certain despatches were moved for by the late Lord George Bentinck, and that an explanation was given by me at the time. The despatches in question related to some apprehended disturbances in the island of Jamaica, in consequence of the monopolists there having been disappointed at the passing of the Sugar Bill in England. The language used was, that several of the plantation proprietors were going to transfer their allegiance to the United States, and it excited considerable alarm among the negro population. The despatches contained a statement relative to the threatened disturbances; they referred to particular individuals by name; they embodied depositions which had not been taken before the magistrates, and also some unproved charges; and those parts which had reference to charges of that nature against individuals were struck out: a course which I am perfectly prepared to defend, and to take again if necessary. I think I have met the charge of the hon. Gentleman; and now I beg to tell him, that when the Committeee meets there will not be the slightest objection to lay before them the whole of the despatches received, not for the use of the House or the public, but in order to show them that there is nothing to justify the term "mutilation," which has been used. Whatever was withheld on a former occasion was extracted simply with a view to the just protection of private character; and my noble Friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies would have been unworthy the position he holds had he scrupled to act as he did.

Mr. BAILLIE: Will you lay the despatches before the House?

Mr. HAWES: Certainly not. I will lay them before the Committee, but not before the House and the public.

Mr. BAILLIE: You must recollect that the Committee does not sit on the affairs of Jamaica, but on those of Ceylon.

Mr. HAWES: I will not consent to lay them before the House and the public.

Mr. BERNAL OSBORNE: Is the Committee to be a secret one?

Mr. HAWES: Certainly not, so far as I know.

Mr. HUME: I thought they were to sit on the affairs of the Colonies generally.

Mr. BAILLIE: They are limited to those of Ceylon.

Subject dropped.

CALIFORNIA.

Mr. WYLD wished to ask the noble Lord the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether the Government of this country had appointed a British Consul at San Francisco, or in any other part of California?

Viscount PALMERSTON: This is a question which is not now put to me for the first time. I have had it put to me privately by a number of persons, some of whom were no doubt interested in their own prosperity. There is no intention, however, on the part of Her Majesty's Government to appoint a Consul to California; and I think that the hon. Gentleman and the House will see that such an appointment would be impossible at the present moment, considering that at this moment there is no form of government established in California, with whom a consul could communicate. Under present circumstances, I fear a consul, like others, would have nothing to do but to pick up the gold, and communicate with the goldfinders.

THE RIVER PLATE.

Mr. EWART wished to ask a question of the noble Lord the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with respect to the affairs of the River Plate, to which, on a former occasion, the noble Viscount had not given as unambiguous a reply as could have been desired by the parties interested. He wished, first, to ask him whether the Government entertained a hope of effecting a settlement of these affairs; secondly, whether the reception of our new envoy in Buenos Ayres had been such as to justify the hope of a favourable settlement; and, thirdly, what was the present state of the negotiations with respect to these affairs?

Viscount PALMERSTON said, that it would occupy some time to detail with exactness the present state of these negotiations. Briefly, however, he might state that a proposition had been made by the English and French Governments, which had not been accepted, and that it remained for the French Government to determine whether they would make any fresh proposals. Mr. Southern had not yet been received officially; but he had been privately received with all possible cordiality, and he might say with distinction. Mr. Southern had been received by General Rosas, and there was reason to believe that in a short time he would be permitted to present his credentials. Negotiations were pending, and he saw no reason why a satisfactory arrangement should not shortly be come to.

WORKING WOMEN IN FACTORIES BY RELAYS.

Mr. HINDLEY asked the right hon. the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government, as stated in some of the public journals, to bring in a Bill to authorise the working women and young persons in factories by relays, and if so, when it was probable the Bill would be introduced?

Sir G. GREY said, that conflicting decisions had been given as to the construction of one of the clauses of the Factory Act, relating to the point alluded to by the hon. Gentleman, which decisions, in his opinion rendered some amendment of the clause in question necessary. The Government had recently had interviews with several parties interested in the matter, but the subject was one which required much consideration. A Bill was in preparation on the subject; but he thought it unadvisable to state the provisions of a measure until leave was asked to introduce it.

CONVICTS IN IRELAND—TRANSPORTATION.

MR. H. A. HERBERT asked whether Her Majesty's Government contemplated the adoption of any immediate measures for the removal of convicts from the gaols in Ireland? He had received a statement from his own county (Kerry), from which it appeared that there were at present three times the number of prisoners in the gaols that there was accommodation for, and that a daily increase was being made.

SIR G. GREY believed the prisons were very much crowded. There were two classes of prisoners, the greater portion of whom were only waiting for trial. The Government had no power of placing these prisoners in any other gaol. The Prison Act imposed on grand juries the obligation to make sufficient provision for the accommodation of ordinary prisoners. The Lord Lieutenant had directed communications to be sent to grand juries on the subject. With respect to prisoners under sentence of transportation, it was quite true that they had been detained in gaol longer than usual; but that arose from the enormous increase which had take place in the number sentenced to transportation. Formerly the number did not exceed 500 annually, but last year it amounted to 2,500. At the last quarter-sessions he understood the number sentenced to transportation amounted to 559, being an excess of the annual number in former years. The Government had made every effort to provide increased accommodation. A considerable number had been removed, and ships were now receiving some for Australia. A depôt had been established at Spike Island, which depôt was now in the course of being enlarged.

RAJAH OF SATTARA.

MR. HUME rose to move—

"For a Return of the amount of money paid for the maintenance of the family of the late Purtaub Shean, the late Rajah of Sattara, since his death, and the dates on which the payments were made."

The hon. Member said, on the authority of letters which he held in his hand, that when the British Government resolved to remove the Rajah, an assurance was given that if he lived quietly, and conformed to the wishes of the East India Company, all his private property would be surrendered. But no portion of it had ever been paid to him or his heirs. Orders had been given to make certain payments to Purtaub Shean. He (Mr. Hume) was told that the Government had offered money to his family; but that the Ranee would not grant the proper receipt. The fact, however, was that the money which had been promised had not been paid. He wished to know why that infraction of public faith had taken place?

MR. G. THOMPSON seconded the Motion.

SIR J. C. HOBHOUSE observed, that his hon. Friend on more than one occasion had stated that a stipulated sum was agreed to be paid on account of the Rajah of Sattara. On the death of Purtaub Shean it was resolved that a certain portion of that sum should be given to his family; and, to show his hon. Friend that what he stated last year was founded entirely on fact, he begged to read an extract of a letter from the Governor General on the subject. The Earl of Dalhousie said—

"I fully concur with you in your opinion, that the family should be treated with ample liberality. We have done so by the Ex-Rajah and his people. 50,000 rupees were given for his funeral expenses, 2,500 rupees for the monthly support of his family and supporters, till a final settlement was made. The Ranee refused to receive the 50,000 rupees unless we received a receipt signed by the boy, as representing the ex-Rajah; and she would not receive any money unless the whole allowed to the ex-Rajah was continued to the boy. Of course we refused to pay the 50,000 rupees, and she would not have the other. Ultimately the daughter has been allowed 1,756 rupees a month from the date of the ex-Rajah's death to the 1st of July, paying all the retainers; on the 1st of July this allowance to cease, the retainers to look out for themselves, as it appeared that only a few of them came from Sattara with the ex-Rajah. The daughter will have her own allowance of 500 rupees a month, and her travelling expenses to Sattara when she goes. The old Ranee has her 800 rupees, which she would not receive. This is the course that has been pursued with the ex-Rajah's family."

That letter was dated the 7th of August, and he had not had any communication since, except to the effect that the Ranee had refused to receive the money. He could assure his hon. Friend that there was every disposition on the part of the Governor General of India to act with the greatest liberality to the family of the Rajah, and to provide, as far as possible, for their comfort.

Mr. G. THOMPSON inquired whether, in the event of a manifestation of willingness on the part of the family of Purtaub Shean to receive the money, there would be any indisposition on the part of the Government to pay the arrears? The family was involved in great embarrassment, with a large number of retainers. They had not received the money simply because they thought it would compromise their rights. He had given a contrary opinion, and thought that, without any compromise, they could fairly accept what had been kindly and generously offered.

Sir J. W. HOGG must be permitted to observe that the disposition to provide for the family of the ~~deceased~~ Rajah of Sattara was just as strong on the part of the local Government as it was on the part of his right hon. Friend (Sir J. C. Hobhouse) and of the Court of Directors. But what he would ask, was the use of discussing the question which had now been raised, when they had no despatches as to what had been done in the matter? He repeated, that there was every disposition on the part of the local Government to give a fair, liberal, and immediate consideration to the claims of the family.

Mr. HUME observed, that the order of the Court of Directors was dated in June, 1846, and up to January nothing had been done. The family, therefore, remained in a state of starvation. Good intentions might exist, but intentions would not feed the hungry.

Sir J. W. HOGG protested against accusations, which involved the local Government being brought on the authority of letters taken out of the pocket of an hon. Member, in the absence of official information.

The Motion was then agreed to.

SALARIES AND PENSIONS.

Mr. HUME moved—

"For a List, alphabetically arranged, of all persons in England, receiving salaries, pensions, pay, profits, fees, emoluments, allowances or grants of Public Money, between the 5th day of January 1848, and the 5th day of January 1849, the amount of which exceeds 200*l*.; stating the total amount received by each individual, and distinguishing the sources from which the payments are made, and the aggregate of the whole:

"Similar Return of all persons in England, receiving salaries, pensions, pay, profits, fees, emoluments, allowances or grants of public money (not including those persons paid by wages), between the 5th day of January 1848 and the 5th day of January 1849, the amount of which is upwards of 50*l*., and not exceeding 200*l*. sterling each person, the total amount received by each individual, and distinguishing the sources from which the payments are made, and the aggregate of the whole; so as to exhibit in those two Lists every person in England in the receipt of 50*l*. and upwards from those and from all other sources of public money (the Church excepted).

"Also, two similar Lists for Scotland, and two similar Lists for Ireland."

He brought forward this Motion because public attention was now being directed to every possible means of effecting economy in the public expenditure; and these returns would help to facilitate that result. England was the only country he knew of which had not a list regularly prepared of all the fixed salaries paid out of the public purse. The only objection that could be offered to his Motion that he knew of was the time and expense that would be required to make out these returns; but if the House chose to appoint a Committee upstairs, he (Mr. Hume) would undertake all the trouble, and to have the lists printed at a cost not exceeding 10*l*. It was most essential that the nation should know how its money was expended, and with that view he submitted the present Motion.

Mr. J. PARKER objected to the Motion, on the ground of the great trouble and difficulty of classification in the returns, as well as upon the score of expense. These inconveniences had already been greatly experienced in making out two recent lists of all salaries of 800*l*. and 1,000*l*. In 1835 and 1844, returns of a somewhat similar character had been ordered, and occupied from fifty to sixty printed pages. The second return, in particular, would be very extensive.

Mr. HUME said, that in moving for these returns he had no desire to create any unnecessary trouble or expense, without leading to any good results; but the hon. Member for Finsbury had some years ago moved for similar returns, only the lowest salary he included was 100*l*. and although these returns had been ordered at the time, they had never yet been produced.

Lord J. RUSSELL saw no objection to the production of these returns; the only question was, whether any public advantage that would arise from them would equal either the trouble or expense of preparing them. If the hon. Gentleman would put off his Motion for a few days, the Government, in the meantime, would make inquiries to ascertain the amount of expense.

Mr. HUME acceded, and accordingly postponed his Motion.

WAR IN THE PUNJAUB.

Motion made, and Question proposed—

> "That, in reference to that part of Her Majesty's gracious Speech informing Her Parliament that a Rebellion had broken out in the Punjaub, an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that She will be pleased to direct all Papers relating to an event of this domestic and important character to be laid before the House without further delay."

Mr. G. THOMPSON said, he had no desire to press his Motion, but a great want of information existed in the country, and in this House even, with regard to the causes of the war going on in the Punjaub. He had no desire to make out a case against the Government of India in the absence of the official papers; but as the events connected with the war had been reported in the ordinary vehicles, the information now before the world showed no sufficient cause for the operations now going on in that country. He, however, had no desire to press his Motion for these papers against the wish of the right hon. President of the Board of Control and that of the Government; but he trusted the right hon. Baronet would see the desirability of giving an assurance to the public that, as soon as the convenience of the public service would allow, the whole of these official papers would be laid upon the table. Therefore, he would propose his Motion as a matter of form.

Sir J. C. HOBHOUSE said, he was exceedingly glad that the hon. Member had taken the very discreet course of not pressing this Motion. Had it been pressed he should have felt it impossible, in the situation he held, to consent to the production of all the papers. The hon. Gentleman himself admitted that there were some, the production of which might be prejudicial to the public interest; and he could assure the hon. Gentleman and the House, that there would be no delay in printing any that were necessary for the public information. If the subject of the proceedings in the Punjaub were brought under discussion at the proper time, after the papers were given, he doubted not that the hon. Gentleman and the House would absolve the Indian Government altogether from any improper conduct in this matter. He could not quite agree with the hon. Member as to the state of ignorance of the House relative to the causes of this war. The public newspapers had given a very fair account of the outbreak, and its causes, and nearly all the transactions of importance that had occurred had been detailed with considerable fidelity. He was certain that, when the proper time came, the Governor General and the Indian Government would be absolved from all blame, and it would be found that they had taken the only course they could take consistent with the security and honour of the British empire in India.

Mr. BERNAL OSBORNE said, he could easily conceive that there would be some inconvenience in producing the papers at present, as hostilities had not yet been terminated. But he hoped there would be no objection to the production of the despatch of Sir Joseph Thackwell to Lord Gough, which, as he understood, was in the hands of the Government, and which the friends of Sir Joseph Thackwell were anxious should be made public.

Sir J. C. HOBHOUSE said, he believed that despatch was a letter written by Sir Joseph Thackwell to the Governor General. He knew there was such a document, but he thought it had not yet been forwarded to the Home authorities. He knew it had been alluded to, but he would not say for certain that it had come over. However, he would make inquiry, and let the hon. Gentleman know the result; and afterwards, if it were shown that there were special circumstances making the production of that paper desirable, and if he found that there was no objection to giving it, he would do so.

Mr. G. THOMPSON said, the papers relating to the military operations in Scinde had been laid before the House while the army was still in Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

BUCKINGHAM SUMMER ASSIZES BILL.

Order for Second Reading read. Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. G. C. DUPRE, in rising to move the second reading of this Bill, said, the object of the measure was merely to place the county of Buckingham upon the same footing as every other county in England and Wales, with regard to the provision of a convenient place for holding the county assizes. The town of Buckingham, where the summer assizes for the county of Buckingham were held at present, was very inconveniently situated for all parts of the county, and great complaints had recently been made because the summer assizes were not held in a more central part of the county. Aylesbury, where the spring assizes for the county were regularly held, was situated equidistant from almost all parts of the county, and a large gaol had recently been erected there at great expense, and fitted up for the separate system of confinement of prisoners; and this circumstance, together with the general accommodation and convenience the change would afford to the whole of the county, rendered it highly desirable that the summer assizes should be removed to that town in future. The Judges of assize had frequently complained of the inconvenience of holding the assizes in the town of Buckingham, and repeated memorials, from a full bench of magistrates assembled in quarter-sessions, had been addressed to the Privy Council, praying for an alteration. The ratepayers of the county, too, were strongly in favour of the change he proposed to effect by this Bill, which would empower the Privy Council to avail themselves of the powers of the Act of William IV., enabling it to appoint a convenient place for holding the assizes. The removal from the town of Buckingham to the town of Aylesbury, would, as he already said, be a great public good. He saw the hon. Member for the borough of Buckingham (the Marquess of Chandos) in his place ready to oppose him. Now, he could assure the noble Marquess that he had no wish to injure the town of Buckingham; but he trusted that no old associations, or personal feelings, or personal interests, would be allowed to stand in the way of conferring this boon upon the public at large.

The **Marquess of CHANDOS** said, in reference to what had been said by his hon. Friend, he begged to say that he stood there on no hereditary right, and would not oppose a Bill of this kind on any such ground as that suggested. He would not oppose the Bill if he were convinced by the argument of his hon. Friend that the proposed change would be for the convenience of the county generally; but he was not quite convinced, from what had been stated by his hon. Friend, that such would be the result. On a former occasion there had been a meeting of magistrates, at which a proposal for a measure similar to this had been defeated by a majority of three to one; and he should also remark, that he thought he had the pleasure of numbering his hon. Friend himself amongst those who voted with him in opposition to this measure on that occasion. On a subsequent occasion he believed his hon. Friend would have voted in the same way, but the question was not brought to a division. The question was not one between Aylesbury and Buckingham, but it was a question of great importance to the two ends of the county; and the measure, if carried, would cause great inconvenience to many of the magistrates of the county. If the question were again brought before the magistrates, not at an adjourned sessions, but at the quarter-sessions, he felt assured that the result that had occurred on the former occasion to which he had alluded would again take place. He felt it his duty, not only on the part of his constituents, but also on behalf of many of the magistrates of the county, to move that this Bill be read a second time this day six months.

Amendment proposed — "To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"

Sir G. GREY hoped, that the noble Marquess would not press his opposition to this Bill. It was not a measure that would necessarily cause a change in holding the assizes; the single object of the Bill was to place the county of Buckingham in the same position as every other county in England; that is to say, that the Queen should have the power of changing the place for holding the assizes, by an Order in Council, pursuant to the provisions 3 and 4 William IV. A communication had taken place with the Attorney General on this matter, as it was thought that the general Act would include Buckingham, notwithstanding the specific Act of Parliament, the repeal of which was now sought; but on looking into the subject, it was considered that as the specific Act was not referred to in that general Act, it therefore was not included in it. After this explanation, he trusted the noble Marquess would not press his opposition, more especially as the grounds on which the specific Act was passed no longer existed.

The **Marquess of CHANDOS**, after the explanations that had been given, would not press his Amendment.

Question proposed—"That the word 'now' stand part of the Question." Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main question put, and agreed to.

Bill read 2°.

House adjourned at half after Seven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, February 28, 1849.

Minutes.] Public Bills.—*Reported.*—Overseers (Cities and Boroughs); Outdoor Paupers.

Petitions Presented. By Viscount Ebrington, from a Public Meeting held in the Assembly Rooms at Kingsbridge, for an Alteration of the Law respecting the Church of England Clergy.—By Mr. Reynolds, from the Parish of Rathcoole, Dublin, and from several other Places, for a Repeal of the Paper Duty.—By Mr. Farrer, from the Middlebro' and Redcar Railway, respecting the Taxation on Railways.—By Mr. Mackinnon, from Manchester, for Prohibiting the Employment of Dogs for Drawing Carts.—By Mr. Meagher, from the Waterford Sanitary Association, in favour of an Health of Towns (Ireland) Bill.—By Mr. Dod, from the Board of Guardians of the Market Drayton Union, for the Suppression of Mendicancy.—By Sir Thomas Birch, from Shipowners, and Others, of the Port of Liverpool, and by other Hon. Members, from several other Places, against a Repeal of the Navigation Laws.—By Mr. Pole Carew, from the Board of Guardians of the Liskeard Union, Cornwall, respecting the Poor Law Assessment.—By Viscount Ebrington, from the Board of Guardians of the Honiton Union, Devonshire, respecting the Law of Settlement.—By Mr. O'Flaherty, from the Ratepayers of the Scariff Union, for an Alteration of the Poor Law (Ireland).—By Mr. Boyle, from the Borough of Frome, for the Suppression of Promiscuous Intercourse.—From Frances Sarah Barlee, of Duke's Bridge House, Bungay (Suffolk) for an Alteration of the Law respecting Public Roads.—By Mr. Meagher, from the Waterford Sanitary Association, for an Accurate Registration of Births, Deaths, and Marriages (Ireland).—By Mr. George Thompson, from the Belfast Anti-Slavery Society, respecting the Slave Trade (Trinidad).—By Sir R. Price, from Hereford, and its Vicinity, and from several other Places, for Referring War Disputes to Arbitration.

INSOLVENT MEMBERS BILL.

Mr. MOFFATT moved that the Order of the Day for the Committee on this Bill be read.

Order for Committee read. — Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Mr. T. GREENE begged to suggest to the hon. Member for Dartmouth the propriety of referring the Bill to a Select Committee. He was quite convinced that unless referred to a Select Committee in the first instance, it never could be made a working measure. He appealed to the right hon. Baronet the Secretary for the Home Department, to say whether the course he recommended was not that best calculated to carry the Bill into a law. In making these observations he did not wish it to be supposed that he had any desire or intention of shelving the question. He was as strongly impressed as any man with the expediency of excluding insolvents from seats in that House.

Sir G. GREY entirely agreed with the proposal for referring the Bill to a Select Committee. He had hitherto remained silent, in the expectation that the hon. Member for Dartmouth would accede to the suggestion made on a former occasion by the hon. Member for Lancaster. He (Sir G. Grey) had been in communication with the hon. Member for Dartmouth, and had understood from him that it was his intention, in compliance with the suggestions of several Members, to refer the Bill to a Select Committee. Otherwise he (Sir G. Grey) should have put a Motion on the paper for that purpose.

Mr. MOFFATT said, that conceiving also the investigation of a Committee would be likely to render the law more permanent and sound, he should have no objections to such a course.

Mr. GOULBURN said, it was proper that this Bill should be referred to a Select Committee, as one of the objects would be to reconcile the rights of the creditor with the duties of that individual who had been returned to that House as one of the representatives.

Mr. BERNAL said, the point in question was most important, and had never been sufficiently considered by hon. Members in all its bearings. It was, therefore, most expedient that it should be referred to a Select Committee to be inquired into.

Mr. MACKINNON considered that the hon. Gentleman deserved great credit for bringing forward the Bill, and now consenting to refer it to a Select Committee. He (Mr. Mackinnon) hoped the Committee would be limited to certain objects, for if they were required to enter into the present question he was satisfied they would go on till the end of the Session, and nothing would be done. If they were confined to the more important points, the Committee would be able to come to a conclusion at an early period.

Mr. HENLEY did not see how one side of the case only could be referred to a Select Committee. If the Bill was to be referred to a Select Committee, the whole subject ought to be considered by that Committee.

The LORD ADVOCATE said, it was impossible to consider the privileges of Members without also considering the rights of creditors. These subjects were completely connected; the Bill ought, therefore, to be referred to a Select Committee.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.—Order for Committee of the whole House discharged.—Bill committed to a Select Committee.

PUBLIC ROADS BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. CORNEWALL LEWIS, in moving the second reading of this Bill, observed, that since he had last the honour of addressing the House on this subject, he had received various communications respecting it from different parts of the country, which all tended to show how various were the interests involved, and how very difficult it would be to introduce a measure which would give universal satisfaction. That the difficulties were numerous and serious was a fact which did not admit of dispute; but he was not without hope that by careful deliberation they might be all satisfactorily adjusted. The Bill which he had now the honour to submit to the House, was a purely economical measure of internal improvement, and in no respect a political measure. He believed that the criticisms that had been passed upon it were *bonâ fide* and sincere, and that they were totally untinctured by any mixture of political feeling. He gratefully acknowledged the fair spirit with which the measure had been generally received; and he felt assured that whatever obstacles it might have to encounter would not be of a political character. The reason why the Bill had originated with the Ministry was, not that the Government, as a Government, had any particular vocation to bring forward a measure on the subject, but simply because, from their superior command of official information, and from their greater facilities for procuring professional advice, it was easier for them to frame a satisfactory and comprehensive measure than it could have been for any private Member to have done so. The Bill had been framed with a view to meet all the exigencies of the case; and its promoters had been exclusively influenced by the desire to manifest a spirit of the strictest impartiality with respect to the different interests concerned. The subject might be divided into two parts — that which related to the machinery of the future administration of the roads, and that which had reference to the debt contracted by the turnpike trusts. The administrative machinery was, of course, the most important branch with respect to the future; but it was not that particular portion which just at the present moment pressed most urgently for consideration. In preparing this measure as it had originally been framed, the precedent established by the Act introduced by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Ripon (Sir J. Graham) for the management of the six south Welsh counties, namely, that of making the county rate remain as a security for the payment of the principal and interest of the debt contracted under the turnpike trusts, had been adhered to; but it having been forcibly represented that that plan was calculated to impose new and heavy burdens on the county rate at a moment when the agricultural interests had to contend with many difficulties; and that, in a word, the principle, at all times objectionable in itself, was peculiarly so at the present moment—the Government had consented to reconsider the matter, and were prepared to modify that portion of the Bill which related to the extinction of the debt in the manner he spoke of, and to confine the security of the turnpike trust-holders to the security of the turnpike roads. The total income derivable from turnpike trusts for the year 1846, was 1,267,000*l.*, and there were other receipts amounting to 31,000*l.*, making a total of 1,298,000*l.* The amount of the debt in 1846 was 6,609,000*l.* The plan which he proposed was, that the present tolls should be collected by the county-roads boards, for the final and eventual purpose of paying off the debt; and that whatever surplus remained after paying an interest of 4 per cent on the trust debts, and allocating a certain portion of the revenue, in the proportion of 2 per cent, for the formation of a sinking fund, should be paid over to some commissioners or other officers in London, who were to be under the control of the Secretary of State for the Home Department; and that those commissioners should compound with the bondholders and settle the amount of each debt, as in the case of the South Wales counties, and that their awards should be final. Each bondholder was to receive a debenture entitling him to receive 4 per cent per annum on his trust debt; and the produce of the sinking fund of 2 per cent was to be devoted to the purpose of paying off, in succession, all who might wish to have their bonds paid off. Any surplus that might remain over was to be applied to the extinction of the other bonds in rotation, the debentures to be chosen by ballot. That would avoid the principle of annuities, so much objected to by the hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Henley), as the bond would be paid off *in toto*. According to his plan, 6 per cent on the sum of 6,609,000*l.*, the amount of the debt, would be 396,540*l.*; the expense for repairs of roads would be 673,000*l.*, or thereabouts; and, if he added 57,000*l.* for improvements, the total sum would be 1,126,000*l.*; or, in round numbers, they might say 1,130,000*l.* The cost of repairing and improving the present turnpike roads, together with the payments on account of the interest at 4 per cent, and the sinking fund at 2 per cent, would amount in the aggregate to 1,130,000*l.*; but, according to his calculations, there would be still a balance on account of revenue of 170,000*l.*, so that, assuming his calculations to be correct, it was clear that the turnpike trusts, taken in the aggregate, were quite solvent. In the course of twenty-eight years, the whole of the debt would be extinguished by the process he recommended. [Mr. W. MILES: You have not mentioned the salaries.] The hon. Member for Somersetshire had reminded him that he had omitted salaries from his statement. The account under that head at present stood as follows:—Turnpike salaries, and law charges, 113,000*l.*; highway salaries, 52,000*l.*; highway law charges, and incidental expenses, 14,000*l.*; total expense, 179,000*l.* But the surplus balance he had already calculated as 170,000*l.*; so that even taking those items into consideration, it would be seen that the establishment, viewed as a whole, was solvent. He was most decidedly of opinion that the plan he proposed would cause a very considerable reduction in costs of establishment, and the expenses of litigation; but even though no such result should be realised, the balance remaining over after the turnpike trust expenditure, would be more than sufficient to cover the expenses of the machinery. With regard to the subject of the unpaid interest, it amounted at present to 1,400,000*l.* It was proposed by his plan that all arrears of interest of more than ten years' standing should not be recoverable. He had been informed that in some cases the interest had not been paid for forty years, and in other cases not for sixty; but he was sure that the House would concur with him in thinking that it was not fair that such arrears should be charged upon taxes to be levied on the travellers existing in the present day. Ten years was the period of limitation he was prepared to recommend; but it was very possible that upon such a point there might be diversity of opinion, and he was therefore quite willing that it should be carefully canvassed on a future occasion. That some limitation ought to be determined on was certain. He was well aware that there was a considerable number of trusts which were insolvent, or nearly so; and he was of opinion, that when the bonds came to be examined and valued, it would be seen that a very considerable reduction in the debts claimed ought to take place. By a reference to the report of the commissioners who were appointed to value the roads in South Wales, and to determine the diminution that should be made in the debt, he found the results thus stated:—The total amount of debt claimed was 290,722*l.* 19*s.* 7*d.*—the sum awarded was 214,783*l.* 14*s.*, being a reduction of 27 per cent, or more than one quarter of the whole sum claimed. There were thirty-one trusts in the six counties: in fifteen of these the bondholders received the full amount of their securities, in nine they were paid at a discount of from 10 to 20 per cent; in five, at a discount varying from 20 to 50 per cent; in one case, the sum received was 20*l.*, and in another only 10*l.*, or a mere nominal sum. Therefore, taking into consideration the reductions which could be made on account of arrears of interest due for more than ten years, and making allowance for the deductions which must of necessity take place through the process of composition, he thought he was at liberty to assume, that if he reckoned 6 per cent as the sum annually accruing on account of the whole debt of 6,609,000*l.*, he would be calculating as much as the turnpike trusts would be called upon to meet. He could state, that if over the whole of England the sum total of the tolls were devoted to the extinction of the debts in trust, those debts would be extinguished in four years and a half. He had prepared a statement illustrating the operation, in a few particular districts, of the plan which he desired to see extended to the country at large. He would first instance the case of Stokenchurch turnpike trust: there the interest on the debt was 550*l.*; repairs, 1,465*l.*; salaries, law charges, and incidental expenses, 472*l.*; total income, 2,487*l.* According to his plan the case stood thus:—interest, 520*l.*; repairs, 1,465*l.*; sinking fund, at the rate of 2 per cent, 305*l.*; surplus, 197*l.* In the county of Oxford the case was as follows:—interest on the debt, 3,557*l.*; repairs, 9,818*l.*; debts paid off, 1,350*l.*; salaries, law charges, &c., 3,014*l.*; total, 17,739*l.* According to his plan the facts stood thus:—interest on the debt, 3,420*l.*; repairs, 9,818*l.*; sinking fund of 2 per cent, 1,710*l.*; surplus, 2,791*l.* Taking the whole of England (excluding Wales) he found that there was paid at present—for interest, 262,711*l.*; repairs, 651,746*l.*; debts paid off, 167,102; salaries, 147,898*l.*; total, 1,229,457*l.* By his plan the interest would be 255,501*l.*; repairs, 651,746*l.*; sinking fund two per cent, 127,750*l.*; leaving a surplus of expenditure to the amount of 194,460*l.* According to the present law, no provision whatever was made for the gradual extinction of the principal of the turnpike debt; and if they continued their practice of renewing local Acts without saying one word about the necessity of creating a sinking fund, the youngest amongst them would be dead before the debt was extinguished. His plan would provide for the gradual extinction of the debt in a period not exceeding at the most twenty-eight years; and within a shorter period still, at the discretion of those counties which, being less burdened than others, might prefer some more expeditious mode than a sinking fund of 2 per cent. According to the Turnpike Acts at present in force, trustees were bound to give preference to the payment of interest to bondholders, before any money whatever was expended on the repair of the roads; so that his plan, which contemplated the formation of a sinking fund, implied no material departure from the spirit of the existing Acts. Those Acts made no provision for the gradual extinction of the debt, and the consequence was, that an addition of 6,500,000*l.* was made to the national debt of England, without the hope of redemption. Other modern enactments had expressly acknowledged the principle that monies advanced should be gradually repaid out of the local rates and taxes. Thus, for instance, loans advanced for the building of union or parish workhouses, had originally to be repaid in ten years—subsequently the term was enlarged to twenty years—county bridges, fourteen years; county prisons, station houses, and strong rooms under the Police Acts, twenty years; shire halls, fourteen years; lunatic asylums, thirty years, and so on; and he was clearly of opinion that it would be most judicious practically to acknowledge the same principle in any new measure with respect to the turnpike trusts. With respect to the machinery by which the Bill should be carried out; that was a question which might be more satisfactorily arranged in Committee. He would only observe that the principle of placing all the roads in a county, both turnpikes and highways, under the management of a board of the county magistrates, appeared to him to be that part of the project which met with most general approbation. With respect to the distribution of the country into districts, the Bill proposed to take the limits of the poor-law unions; but this was a point that had created more difference of opinion than the county boards. He thought that it would not be advisable to put the counties to the trouble, the inconvenience, and the expense of electing a new set of municipal local bodies. The duty of the local boards, for which purpose it would be necessary that they should meet about six times in the year, would be to superintend the expenditure and management of the roads — which of course would be in the hands of the surveyors — the amount to be expended being fixed by the county boards. His opinion was that the poor-law guardians as already constituted might very properly be entrusted with the powers of the local highway boards, though if any other machinery should be suggested for the purpose, he should be ready to give to the suggestion his best consideration. The proposition that the highway rate should be extinguished, and the whole charge imposed on the county rate, would be in effect an alteration in name rather than in substance. If, however, it should be thought desirable to keep up the name of a highway rate, he knew of no reason for not making the charge as a county highway rate, but distinguishing it from the ordinary county rate. His opinion, generally, was in favour of the consolidation of rates as far as possible, in order to avoid the expense of collection and confusion which must necessarily attend the levying of a variety of rates. He had now stated the changes which it was proposed to make in the Bill, in order to meet the views of the House. The Government had not the least wish to press the matter forward with any undue celerity; on the contrary, they considered it was highly desirable to give time for the fullest consideration. This being the case, he was prepared to adopt any course that the general feeling of the House indicated as most convenient. If the House was willing to entertain the plan which he had sketched out, and would allow the Bill to be read a second time, it might then be committed *pro formâ*, reprinted, and circulated for more mature consideration.

MR. W. MILES had come down to offer the Bill his most decided opposition; but after the speech just delivered by the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, he found that the measure had undergone so complete a change that many of its most obnoxious provisions had been totally removed. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Well, perhaps he was wrong in saying they were totally removed, but at all events they were very much modified. He was decidedly opposed to any kind of imposition upon the county rate to aid the payment of the permanent debt of turnpike trusts. The hon. Gentleman who introduced the Bill had entered into a variety of statements, the materials for which were of course most accessible to him; and it would be highly desirable that the House should have an opportunity of considering the documents upon which the statements had been made before they gave their assent to the principle of the Bill. He was at first a decided opponent of the Bill, but now that the hon. Gentleman had abandoned the charge to be imposed upon the county rate, and had allowed turnpike trusts to pay their debts by degrees, he thought the measure had been shorn of many of its objectionable parts. He suggested that the second reading should be adjourned, the Bill reprinted with the Amendments, and that the documents referred to by the hon. Member should be laid upon the table, in order that hon. Gentlemen might have an opportunity of seeing whether it was possible that the turnpike trusts would be able to pay their debts in the course of twenty-eight years. He had been of opinion that the bonded debt on turnpike trusts, from 1834 to the present year, had increased; but he was surprised to find this was not the case, for it appeared that since 1834 no less than 100,000*l.* of the debt had been paid off. This showed that the turnpike trusts possessed within themselves a power to pay off their own debts. The representation made by the hon. Gentleman with reference to the South Wales Act was not quite correct, for he had forgotten to mention that an advance had been made by the Public Works' Commissioners at the commencement, of 225,000*l.*, which formed the original sinking fund by which the debt was to be paid off. The hon. Gentleman had said, that the debt upon these trusts was 290,000*l.*; now, he (Mr. Miles) held in his hand a return, up to the 5th of July, 1848, in which he found that in 1844 the bonded debt was 461,905*l.*, and the unpaid interest 57,086*l.* [MR. LEWIS: That is, for all Wales, both north and south.] He admitted then that he was in error; but still there was an advance of 225,000*l.* to meet the 290,000*l.*, which reduced the balance of the bonded debt to be paid to about 60,000*l.* or 70,000*l.* He hoped the Government would consent to the postponement of the second reading of the Bill, in order that more time might be afforded to consider its provisions; at the same time he was willing, without any party bias, to enter fully into their discussion, though he admitted that he did not wish to preclude himself from even now determining to support the second reading.

MR. RICE reminded the hon. Gentleman opposite, who wished to postpone the second reading in order to afford time for further consideration, that no postponement could take place until they had gone into Committee *pro formâ*. He had not heard the whole of the hon. Under Secretary's statement, but he understood that no material alterations had been made in the Bill. He objected to the clause which left the expenditure of the county money to the control of the guardians, and he also objected that those boards should have the appointment of the public officers who were to do the work. The experience of the past convinced him that it was objectionable in principle, so he hoped the boards would not have the appointment of officers left in their hands. He begged to know whether the chairman and vice-chairman of the board of guardians were also to be the chairmen of the local boards? Though he entertained the objections to which he alluded, he hoped the Bill would be read a second time.

MR. CORNEWALL LEWIS observed, in reply to the hon. Gentleman, that the clause provided that the chairman and vice-chairman of the boards of waywardens were not necessarily to fill the corresponding offices in the local road boards, though they were not to be prevented from doing so, if chosen.

MR. WILSON PATTEN said, the Bill when originally introduced had created great alarm, and it had been the intention of several hon. Members to oppose it; but after the attention which the hon. Under Secretary had paid to the various suggestions thrown out, it was not his (Mr. Patten's) intention to oppose the second reading of the Bill. He thought it very desirable to read the Bill a second time, and commit it *pro formâ* with the intended alterations, so that the House might see it in its new shape. The Bill involved one difficulty. As he understood it, the security of the mortgagees of solvent trusts would not be in any way improved by its provisions; and many trusts, which were perfectly solvent, would consider it a great hardship if they were called upon to pay interest when they would not be improved, but rather left in a worse position. He considered the return with regard to the county of Lancaster to be of a most alarming character. The debt of that county on turnpike trusts was gradually increasing. Owing to the immense number of railways, perhaps, those trusts had been more affected than any other in the kingdom, and the consequence was, that the expenditure amounted to 133,000*l.*, whilst the total income was only 132,000*l.* As the Bill stood before, it was clear that a heavy additional burden would have been placed on the county rates; but the improvement had been so great that he did not intend to offer any opposition to the second reading, but trusted the House would allow the Bill to be committed *pro formâ.*

Mr. BRIGHT had intended to suggest the postponement of the second reading, to give a little more time to the country for considering it; but he understood now that it was not proposed to go into Committee at an early period, probably not earlier than three weeks or a month hence. [Mr. G. C. Lewis: Hear, hear!] If so, he thought it might be desirable to pass the second reading, and have the Bill reprinted with the amendments, and circulated through the country, in order that it might be known exactly what was proposed. He would also suggest to Members, that when measures of this nature were brought forward—measures of extraordinary magnitude, and involving a variety of interests —they should come to their consideration with a disposition not to find fault unnecessarily—or to insist upon the admission of every alteration which each individual might wish to see made—but rather with a desire to make such fair concessions and compromises without which no Government could hope successfully to carry such measures through. His experience as a road trustee—which was not large, as he had never been a member but of one trust—led him to the conclusion that the saving in the expenditure would, under the new management, be much greater than the hon. Gentleman had calculated upon. There was one point in which he most cordially approved of the proposition of the Government, that was the constitution of the county road board. He was not one of those who considered that, as a body, the county magistrates were not capable of efficiently performing their duties; but he believed they were not singularly calculated to act in such affairs without assistance from some other source. Their meetings were not always regular, and their attendance was much less so; the business generally being left to a few of the most active and energetic members. He thought, therefore, that the arrangement which provided that the magistrates, who were in a certain degree responsible, should appoint some of the most active and efficient members of their body to meet and act with the waywardens, was, probably, the best that could be adopted, and one that must give satisfaction to all parties interested. Speaking of the measure generally, if met in the spirit of fair and reasonable concession he had suggested, he believed it might be made most efficient for its purpose.

Mr. CHRISTOPHER would not oppose the second reading of the Bill; but he had some doubts with respect to the proposed alteration of the security afforded for these turnpike trust debts. He understood the hon. Under Secretary to say, that he considered the tolls sufficient to supply that security, and that he proposed to establish an uniform county rate. Now, upon a great many parishes in England, where the roads were kept in good repair, and where the poor-rate and the highway rate were not jumbled together, the highway rate fell very lightly; but upon other parishes the rate fell heavily. The Bill proposed a uniform rate on the county; but this course would inflict great injustice upon those parishes where the highway rates were now exceedingly low. There was an immense difference between the amount of the highway rates in different parishes of the same county; and the highway rates in some parishes were actually higher than the assessment for poor-rates in other parishes. When the poor-law enactment came into operation, he understood the practice to have been this—that the rate was levied in proportion to what the amount of rate for the poor in the district had been for a certain number of years. Now, if some such principle as this were introduced into this Bill, a great portion of the objection to a uniform rate would be removed. He was opposed to making the county responsible for the debt upon the roads; but as the Government proposed to modify this part of the Bill, and give the country time for the consideration of the alterations, he did not think it right, under the cirsumstances, to oppose the second reading.

SIR G. STRICKLAND said, that the main feature and principle of the Bill, in his opinion, was to take the management of the roads out of the local management, and make it county management. He must say he objected to that principle. He thought it was a departure from the old English custom of allowing local boards to manage their own affairs. He quite agreed with the hon. Gentleman the Member for Lincolnshire (Mr. Christopher), that there was a very great variety in the management of the roads in different parts of the country. In some districts the management was good, and the roads were kept in excellent repair; but in other districts the management was bad, and the rates were consequently high. This, he considered, was an argument for improving the management as it existed at present in small localities, but not of transforming the management to a general principle, which, in his opinion, would utterly fail. He did not think the magistrates' board or the board of guardians would work well. Some hon. Gentlemen had said, that the boards of guardians conducted their affairs with great intelligence, and he admitted that, as far as the poor-rate was concerned, no bodies could be more efficient; but, of all persons in the country, the little farmers were the people most jealous of expenditure on account of roads, and least anxious to amend them. They had a decided hostility to be under the surveillance of distant authorities, and their local feelings were so strong that he was sure the boards of guardians would not work well with the magistrates. If, however, it was determined to take the roads out of the present management, it would, he thought, be more desirable to let the magistrates have the appointment of the surveyors, who should be responsible for the due and efficient performance of the work.

MR. HENLEY wished to call attention to the fact, that the Government was now about to introduce a practice which the resolutions of the Committee last year had condemned, in asking them to take the second reading of a Bill *pro formâ*, and to discuss the principle of it afterwards. Nothing could be more inconvenient than that practice, and he begged to ask the Government if they thought they were treating the House fairly in reviving it. They had cast all sorts of reflections on hon. Gentlemen for debating questions out of turn; and yet they now called on the House to allow this Bill to pass a second reading, and then go into Committee on a perfectly new Bill. They could not blame hon. Members, therefore, if they availed themselves of the only opportunity they had left of stating their objections to the measure. It was unfair to attempt to shut the House out from discussing it. The better course would be for them to adopt the recommendation of the hon. Member for Somersetshire (Mr. W. Miles), to withdraw the Bill and reprint it. They would not lose a week by doing so, and hon. Members could then come forward and debate the measure with a full knowledge of its nature. The only difference between this measure and that of last year was, that it threw a smaller burden on the counties for a greater time, and that, instead of the debts being paid off in twenty-one years, they were to be paid off in twenty-eight years. As far as the county rates went, it made no difference. Under the old proposal they had the security of the whole county rate; now they were only offered the security of their own tolls, after undergoing such sublimation in the crucible of the hon. Gentleman opposite as he might think fit to give them. There were some very suspicious words used about the Bill. They had been told "the circumstances of the trusts would be considered." Did that mean the length of time they had to run? Did they intend to lay down no principle on which the arbitrations on turnpike trust debts were to be conducted? Surely something of the kind must be done. The Government would not propose to deal in such a way with the national debt, which was secured by Act of Parliament, just as turnpike trusts were, nor would they venture to apply such a measure towards railways. He hoped they would not press on the second reading, but would withdraw it and bring in another Bill with the proposed alterations, so that the House and the country, as well as the bondholders, among whom considerable anxiety prevailed, might have an opportunity of coming to some mature conclusion. The Government deserved the thanks of the House for grappling with so important a subject, and required no apology if they were not altogether successful; but he begged of them not to force the House into a practice which had already led to evils that it was the honest desire of every Member to avoid during the present Session.

Sir G. GREY wished to correct an erroneous impression entertained by the hon. Gentleman who had last spoken as to the course which the Government proposed to adopt with regard to the second reading of this Bill. His hon. Friend (Mr. C. Lewis), in moving the second reading, had no intention to shut out discussion upon the principle of the Bill. He only asked the House to consent to the second reading, after discussing the principle, and said that, having made some alterations with reference to the mode of extinguishing the trust debt, in consequence of suggestions he had received from various quarters, if the House agreed to the principle of the Bill by allowing it to pass a second reading, they might go into Committee only *pro formâ*, and afterwards have the Bill reprinted with the alterations. There was nothing in the rules to prevent that course from being pursued, for the rules had been so framed as to reserve to the House the power of adopting the most convenient practice for facilitating the progress of public business, namely, that a Bill might, if necessary, be committed *pro formâ*, to allow it to be printed with the alterations in its details; and if they went into Committee *pro formâ*, there was nothing to hinder hon. Gentlemen who did not approve of the alterations from stating their objections on the Motion that Mr. Speaker do leave the Chair for the House to go again into Committee after the Bill had been reprinted. The question was, what was the principle of the Bill? If it was simply to make the county rates a collateral security for the payment of the debt of the turnpike trusts, then he must admit that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Henley) could not, entertaining the views he had expressed, concur in the course recommended by his hon. Friend (Mr. C. Lewis), but, on the contrary, must oppose the Bill altogether. But he (Sir G. Grey) thought his hon. Friend had stated the principle of the Bill. It certainly was stated in the preamble, which recited—

> "Whereas it is expedient that the laws relating to turnpike roads, and to highways, and public bridges in England, and certain parts of Wales, should be altered and amended, and that turnpike roads, highways, and bridges should henceforth be placed under the same management and control, and that the administration thereof, under one joint and uniform system, should be vested in competent authority, &c."

However, in this Bill the objections formerly urged against the original plan for a central administration, proposed some years ago, had been obviated, by still leaving a portion of the old local management to continue in existence, but not that portion which had caused the evils which were now attempted to be remedied. He therefore hoped the House would consent to the second reading of this Bill now, on the understanding that it would be committed only *pro formâ*, with the view of being reprinted; and he could assure the House it would not be asked to go into Committee again until sufficient time had been allowed for the consideration of the details.

Mr. NEWDEGATE observed, that the right hon. Baronet who had just spoken had asked the House not only to agree to the commitment of the Bill *pro formâ*, but had proposed that it should absolutely consent to the principle of it. The principle to which he (Mr. Newdegate) objected, was the casting on the county rate the liability of turnpike trusts. The only alteration now proposed was that a sinking fund should be provided out of the funds derivable from the tolls; but if that fund proved inadequate, the liability was to fall upon the county rates. The Bill before the House was in a great measure a blank, and he objected to it on the ground that it was impossible to say what was its real character. They had had an opportunity of consulting their constituents with respect to the measure as it was originally introduced; but as it appeared that the measure was to be completely changed, it was impossible to say whether the objections made to the Bill in its original form would apply to it in its altered state. It appeared to him, therefore, very injudicious to proceed to the second reading now, inasmuch as neither the Members of the House nor their constituents had had any opportunity of coming to a clear understanding upon it. The hon. Under Secretary who introduced the Bill quoted returns from England and South Wales; but as those returns had not been placed in the hands of hon. Members, it was impossible for him to understand their nature or application, and therefore he should oppose the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. ROBERT PALMER said, that he

had come down expressly to oppose the second reading of the Bill, because he considered it unjust to throw upon the county rates the debts owing by turnpike trusts. He wanted to know upon what principle it was proposed to make one party liable for the incumbrances of another? He believed that in all cases of turnpike trusts, the party who thought proper to lay out his money on bonds from these trusts, expected to receive a very good interest for it. The bonds were of marketable value, and were always purchased with the risk of whether a good or a bad bargain had been made. How, then, was the country to be chargeable with the payment of debts so contracted? He confessed that he was very much in the position of the hon. Member for Somersetshire; and that, as the Bill was to be completely altered, he would not now oppose its second reading, provided he was not considered as committed to it in any way at a future stage. But as the proposed alteration was intended to be so extensive, he thought it would be very desirable if the Bill, as now laid upon the table, were withdrawn; and if a new measure, embodying the projected propositions, was brought in, and the discussion upon that measure postponed to a future day. He understood from the opening speech of the hon. Under Secretary, the proposer of the measure, that that portion of the Bill which threw the burden of the payment of the debts upon the county rate had been withdrawn; but from the course the discussion had since taken, he was not now quite so clear that the county rate was to be altogether discharged from liability, assuming that all the turnpike trusts and tolls were placed in the hands in which it was intended to deposit them. The question seemed to arise, upon what fund were the repairs of the roads to be charged? As the law now stood, if a turnpike trust were insolvent, the burden must fall upon the parish through which the road passed; and, therefore, in point of fact, if there were not hereafter sufficient tolls upon the roads, then it seemed to him that, whether they called it by one name or by another, these repairs would very likely fall upon the county rate. He wished to ask the hon. Under Secretary one question, in order to understand the principle upon which he proposed to proceed. He understood the intention to be, that all the turnpike trusts and tolls in one county were to be placed under one county board, and that with respect to the highway rates, the money was to be thrown into a general fund, from which all the roads in the county were to be repaired. Now, was that so, and, if so, was it a fair proposition? It was well known that some turnpike trusts were solvent, and others insolvent; and was the House going to benefit the insolvent at the expense of the solvent? The same question might be asked with reference to the future distribution of the highway rates; for he thought it very material to consider whether it would be fair to extend the area in which the money was to be expended over the whole county, seeing that the circumstances in one part of that county might be very different from those in another part.

Sir W. JOLLIFFE concurred in many of the observations of the last speaker, but not in the opinion which he expressed when he said the second reading should be postponed on account of the great changes that had been made in the principle of the Bill since it was laid on the table. He admitted the alteration with respect to the turnpikes was a very extensive one; and he (Sir W. Jolliffe) did not quite understand whether the county or the local boards were to have anything more to do with turnpike trusts. So far as he understood, the whole of the turnpike trusts were to be formed into unions of counties, and to be managed exclusively by a board of commissioners in London. At the same time he should say, that the evils of the present law were so great, both as regarded turnpikes and highways, that he was surprised to find so many country gentlemen not entertaining a wish that some large measure should be at once introduced to remedy existing grievances. They could not stand in a worse position than that in which they were at present. There were collected on the turnpike trusts 1,267,000*l.*, and on the highways 1,500,000*l.* Since the adoption of railways the whole of this burden, to the amount of nearly 3,000,000*l.*, fell almost exclusively on the landed interest. There was no interest that suffered more from this taxation than the farmers—it interfered with all their operations—and, so far as they were concerned, the Bill would effect a great improvement. With regard to the interest of bondholders in turnpike trusts, he might say that he held some of those bonds himself, and received upon them various rates of interest, but they were all unsaleable in the market. The whole 6,000,000*l.* in those bonds were locked up, and there was not any real security for a single shilling of it. No hon. Gentleman would think he had provided for his son, his daughter, or his wife by leaving them such bonds at the period of his dissolution. Surely, then, the circumstances of these bondholders ought to be taken into the consideration of the House. The hon. Gentleman who introduced the measure had not explained the principle of assessing the value of the property in South Wales, but he (Sir W. Jolliffe) supposed the assessment would be on the interest received on an average of years. That was the principle on which the House had acted with reference to the Church property and a variety of other properties with which they had to deal, and he could not conceive why the bondholders should not be dealt with on a similar principle. They should get the full value of what they were entitled to.

MR. SPOONER said, his hon. Friend who had just resumed his seat, had expressed his surprise that country Gentlemen should oppose the present Bill; but the hon. Baronet ought to be aware that the agricultural interest was now severely taxed, and that the pressure and unfair principle of taxation to which it was subjected would both be increased if this Bill passed. It had been said in the course of that debate, that the objection to the principle of the Bill had been totally removed by the speech of the hon. Proposer. But it was very little removed; for what was the plan proposed by the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State? It was this—to take the tolls now answerable for the repairs of roads, and to apply them in making up deficient tolls, and then to come upon the county for the repairs of roads. He believed that a great number of turnpike trusts were not only solvent, but that they had a surplus; and if that surplus were properly managed, there would be very few roads which would come upon the highway rates. At present, this surplus was sufficient to keep a large proportion of the roads in repair; but by the Bill now proposed, it would be taken and applied to the insolvent roads, and then by a sort of roundabout way, the repairs of the solvent roads would be charged upon the county. It was without exception the grossest deception that had ever been attempted upon the House, to say that the alteration now intended to be made would lessen the county rates. His opinion was, that it would greatly aggravate the county rates. He had attended a meeting of the farmers of Warwickshire a few days since, when, however they might have differed on other subjects, they were unanimously of opinion on this, that the present Bill was a gross job—an unjustifiable attempt to lay upon the county rates an additional burden, which they were unable to bear, which they ought not to bear, and which the landed interest would resist to the utmost of their power. Then, what was the way in which it was proposed to deal with the bondholders? Why, the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State was about to go to a solvent road, where the bondholder received 5 per cent, and to say to him that he should in future receive only 4 per cent; and then having, by a forced reduction of the interest, lowered the value of the bonds, compel the holder of such bonds to sell them at a price to be fixed by arbitrators. Was that common justice or common honesty? When the Chancellor of the Exchequer reduced the 3 per cent consols to $2\frac{1}{2}$, he was compelled to offer to pay the money; and that ought to be the case with the bondholder. He was, however, to be dealt with on a new principle, and one totally separated from honesty. It was a principle which he was sure hon. Members of that House would not sanction. It was not only a new principle to introduce, but it was a plan totally separated from everything like honesty. He was sure that the House would not sanction it—that they would never make a man take a lower interest than he had been receiving, without allowing him to sell out to the best advantage; and that they would not compel him to sell at such prices as the arbitrators might choose to allow for his property. He knew many bondholders in Warwickshire, and he could assure the House that a great bulk of the money advanced to the trusts was owing to persons of limited income—to men who had lent their 100*l.* or 200*l.*—and that sums of 400*l.* and 500*l.* were due to widows, and that the interest upon that money was the entire means of support which those women possessed. Was it fair to compel persons of this class to take 4 per cent? He could not conceive that the House would lend itself to such a monstrous principle as was involved in the Bill. He agreed with the suggestion previously thrown out, that it ought to be withdrawn and remodelled; and he believed it would be for the interest of the Government themselves to adopt that course. He was by no means opposed to a general measure which would remedy the general evil; but he could not consent to any Bill at the sacrifice of common honesty, neither could he throw upon the counties an additional burden which they were unable to bear. He was perfectly convinced that if the plan now proposed were not withdrawn, the opposition to it which was at present springing up in the country would come upon the Government in the shape of an overwhelming torrent, because to whatever part of England he had gone, he there found one general feeling of disapprobation against the principle of the proposition. Before the House was called upon to give an opinion on this measure, let them have it in the form Her Majesty's Ministers intended to propose it. He had a petition against the Bill; but so many alterations were to be made, that he should not present it, for this simple reason, that he knew not under the circumstances what he might be petitioning against. If any hon. Gentleman would second him, he would move that the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

Mr. MANGLES called the attention of the hon. Gentleman who moved the second reading to the absence of any provision in the Bill giving compensation to parties who were clerks of the present trusts. It was a principle that nothing should be taken away from any man in which he had a vested interest, or anything like a vested interest, without giving him compensation; and therefore he thought that that observation did not deserve the censure which hon. Gentlemen had been pleased to pass upon it. The office was looked upon in the country as one tenable during good behaviour.

Sir J. TYRELL thought the hon. Gentleman must have forgotten that the Speaker was in the chair, when he made a suggestion which ought to have been reserved until the House was in Committee on the Bill. In the present instance they were very much out of place. He had not the advantage of hearing the hon. Under Secretary of State propose his alterations; but as he believed they were numerous, it would not be in their power to consult their constituents with regard to them before the second reading, if the hon. Gentleman should persist in his intention. He thought the hon. Gentleman would act wisely if he conceded to the general feeling of the House, and withdrew the Bill, for the purpose of introducing it in an amended form. They on that side were all anxious that a comprehensive measure should be passed on this subject. It was very flattering, no doubt, to the existing boards of poor-law guardians to be nominated under this Bill for the management of the highway rate; but he apprehended that they had a much greater amount of business to attend to than hon. Gentlemen supposed. He thought the hon. Gentleman would best consult the feelings of the House and the interests of the country if he consented to have the Bill withdrawn and reprinted.

Mr. VERNON SMITH said, that the hon. Gentleman who had introduced the Bill had proposed to take the course which was usually taken on such occasions—namely, to go into Committee *pro formâ*, for the purpose of altering the Bill and reprinting it, and afterwards discussing it in Committee. He thought it would be very objectionable to withdraw the Bill now, because a great deal of time would be lost by bringing in a new Bill. For five successive Sessions a measure on that subject had been brought under the consideration of Parliament; and he hoped the House would not allow the present Session to pass away without applying a remedy to evils which were generally admitted. The point which had been most discussed was, whether the turnpike trusts should be charged on the county rates; but one of the most important principles of the Bill was, whether turnpike trusts should be under one combined management with highways. If he thought that reading the Bill a second time was reading it *pro formâ* only, he should object to it; but he agreed with the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State that the second reading of the Bill did commit the House to the principle of combined management. Another principle was the extension of the area of which surveys were to be taken, and also a better audit of highway accounts. His hon. Friend the President of the Poor Law Commission, would agree with him in the difficulty found to exist in checking poor-law expenditure, because a great deal of it was smuggled into the Highway Rate Acts. He feared that, unless the House now agreed to the second reading, no Bill on the subject would pass during the present Session.

Mr. BANKES agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that they were not called on to read the Bill a second time *pro formâ*, but to sanction its principle and the whole of the important principles contained in the preamble. They were called on to sanction the principle that a county board should take the management of all the roads and turnpike trusts of a county. They were also called on to sanction the principle of amalgamating all the turnpike trusts, solvent and insolvent, and of making the solvent answerable for those trusts which were not solvent. He was not prepared to sanction those principles by his vote without a much larger degree of consideration being given to them. The apprehension that the whole expense would fall on the county rate, was well worthy the gravest attention. The hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, seemed to think that he had in this Bill obviated the objections to the former Bill, with regard to the principle of centralisation. That was not quite true, for it was proposed that the final decision in all disputes should rest with an arbitrator to be appointed by the Government. He did not think they were in a condition to sanction those principles, and would therefore urge on the Government the necessity for some delay prior to the second reading. For this purpose he should have no objection to move the adjournment of the debate for six weeks. ["No, no!"] It seemed to be more agreeable to his Friends that he should negative the second reading. ["No, no!"] He could not vote in favour of the principle of the Bill as it now stood, and should therefore move that the Bill be withdrawn.

Mr. HUME believed that a Bill for consolidating the county trusts would be one of the most important which could be adopted by the House. He was of opinion, that if hon. Members who objected to this Bill would take the trouble to ascertain the expense which the public roads entailed upon counties, they would withdraw their opposition to the measure. Twelve years had now elapsed since he introduced a Bill to consolidate county trusts, to place their financial affairs under the control of a distinct department, and also to consolidate the surveys of roads. That Bill was read a first time; but the country Gentlemen did not choose to accept the reform which he proposed, and the measure was rejected. It was hardly necessary to say, that he approved of the consolidation clauses of the present Bill; but he thought that the parties who were to exercise power under the measure ought to be appointed, wholly or in part, by the ratepayers of counties, as was proposed in his (Mr. Hume's) Bill. He hoped that the hon. Member (Mr. Bankes) would not press his proposal for adjourning the debate for six weeks, because one week now was worth three at the end of the Session.

Mr. MACKINNON, as Chairman of the Committee which sat twelve years ago upon this subject, to which he paid considerable attention, begged to tender his thanks to the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for having introduced this measure. He believed that one-half of the hon. Gentlemen who had spoken that afternoon had entirely mistaken the object of the Bill; for they had asserted that its object was to establish a system of centralisation for the management of the highways of this country, whereas it was only intended to consolidate the turnpike and highway trusts in each county. Unless some such measure as the present were immediately passed, the results would be most injurious to the country at large. He believed that the hon. Gentleman had proceeded in this matter with the greatest care. He had propounded just such a plan as he (Mr. Mackinnon) himself would have presented to the House. Hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House had said that this Bill would commit a great injustice, inasmuch as it proposed to pay the debts of insolvent trusts out of the funds of those that were solvent. He contended that it would commit no injustice whatever, and that it was in fact a direct boon to the insolvent on the one hand, whilst, on the other, it did not injure the property of those interested in the solvent trusts, as it would only be the superabundance of the tolls collected that would be diverted from the wealthy trust. If some measure of this character were not speedily adopted, it was clear that the widows and orphans to whom hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition benches had alluded, would soon lose every shilling of the money standing in their names in the trusts to be affected by this Bill. As to the objection about this being a measure for centralisation of the trusts, he contended that it was no such thing: it did not propose to erect a central board in London; it merely proposed to congregate the trusts in each county, which would have the effect of materially diminishing the expenditure and jobbery in the separate management of each, which was notorious. He would not say that the Bill of the hon. Gentleman was the best that could have been devised; but of this he felt convinced, that it was a disgrace to the Government of the country that some such measure had not been adopted fifteen years ago. The hon. Under Secretary of State deserved the greatest credit for having grappled with the difficulties of this most important, but very little understood, question. This measure would let loose upon the country an immense sum of money, which was now tied up in turnpike trusts. As to the objection which had been raised to the mode of paying the debts of the trusts, he wished to remind hon. Members that the proposed mode of payment involved no new principle; it was the same as adopted in the poor-law unions. As to the principle of the Bill itself, it appeared that nobody objected to it; every one admitted that some such measure ought to be passed. The petty objections which had been raised to the Bill, could be considered in Committee; and he, therefore, saw no reason why the hon. Gentleman should not be allowed at once to press for the second reading of the Bill. To give hon. Gentlemen who opposed the Bill a full opportunity of examining it in detail, the Committee might be postponed for a month if desired.

MR. DEEDES thought that, from what had been said that afternoon by hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House, it must be concluded that the House was anxious to legislate on this most important question, but at the same time he thought that the House had manifested as great an anxiety to understand thoroughly the measure propounded by the Government. He was most favourable to an alteration of the present system. He had practically seen the bad effects of that system, and he was anxious to see it effectually abolished; but he was not prepared to legislate in the dark. At present he would not enter into the details of this Bill. It had been observed by the hon. Member for Lymington (Mr. Mackinnon) that no objection had been made to the principle of the Bill by any hon. Gentleman who had addressed the House; but he (Mr. Deedes) held a very different opinion. He thought that a great many objections—whether sound or not he was not then prepared to say—had been made to the Bill. If the hon. Gentleman himself did not object to the Bill, the only reason that he (Mr. Deedes) could assume for his doing so was that the Bill was in such a state that he could not ascertain what the principle was. He hoped that the Government would consent to afford all parties interested in the measure full time for discussing the question. He thought that the hon. Under Secretary of State would expedite the object which he had in view, by withdrawing this Bill, and substituting another which should embody the material alterations now proposed. No time could eventually be lost by taking that course; and he hoped that the hon. Gentleman would adopt this suggestion, as it appeared to be in accordance with the strongly expressed feeling of a great portion of the House.

SIR J. DUCKWORTH said, that the Bill involved not merely one but several principles; and he would ask under what circumstances hon. Gentlemen were placed who were called upon to decide in favour of or against a Bill, in one of whose principles they agreed, whilst they were totally opposed to the rest? He believed that if the area of management were extended, much of the present maladministration of highways would be remedied. As to the principle of paying off the debts of the trusts, he felt great difficulty in coming to a decision. He objected entirely to the payment of those debts by a county rate. He joined in the request that the hon. Under Secretary of State would for the present withdraw this Bill.

MR. CORNEWALL LEWIS said, if the objection offered to the second reading of the Bill was simply that which had been made by the hon. Member for Warwickshire, and extended to the whole principle of the Bill, he should feel it his duty to press the House to come to a division at once upon the Bill, for no advantage could be gained, under such circumstances, in postponing the second reading. But after the remarks which he had heard from the hon. Member for Exeter (Sir J. Duckworth), as well as from other hon. Gentlemen who had spoken in the course of this debate, it appeared to him (Mr. Lewis) that he might probably place the decision of this question upon an unfavourable ground if he asked some hon. Gentlemen who were favourable upon the whole to the principle of the Bill, but who did not quite understand the nature of the arrangement which was proposed with respect to the extinction of the debt, to proceed at once to vote on the question. He was, therefore, prepared to adopt the suggestion which had been made by several hon. Gentlemen, to withdraw the Bill, for the present, upon the understanding that it should be reintroduced immediately. The alterations to be made in the Bill would be, he thought, much less considerable than some hon. Members who talked about "the entire alteration of the Bill" appeared to imagine. The only alteration which it would be necessary to make in the Bill, would be to vary the wording of a few clauses out of 160. The reintroduction of the Bill could take place in a few days; and if he were allowed to withdraw the Bill for the present, he proposed to fix an early day for again proceeding with the new Bill. With regard to the remarks which were often made as to the accumulation of Government Bills at the end of the Session, he could only say, that this measure had been introduced at the earliest period of the present Session; and he thought that all must admit that it was desirable to dispose of the question as speedily as possible. If the House would permit him, he would now move that the Bill be withdrawn.

Mr. HUME very much regretted that the hon. Gentleman had consented to withdraw the Bill—because it would go forth to the public that the Government had renounced or given up their Bill. If, as the hon. Gentleman asserted, the Bill required alteration in only four or five of its clauses, surely that alteration could take place in Committee. If, however, the hon. Gentleman should give way to the opponents of the Bill so far as to consent to its withdrawal for the present, he hoped that he would fix the day on which he proposed to reintroduce it. He trusted that the interim would be short.

Sir G. GREY thought that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Lewis) had sufficiently guarded himself against the inference attempted to be drawn by the hon. Member for Montrose (Mr. Hume). He had distinctly stated that with regard to the objections of the hon. Member for Warwickshire, which went to the whole principle of the Bill, and also with respect to that of the hon. Member for Dorsetshire, which went to the county rating, he should not consent to any postponement of the Bill, because, if he did, it would be manifest that the Government had yielded to those objections. But when several hon. Gentlemen stated that they were unwilling to proceed to a vote on the principle of the Bill till they had seen and had had an opportunity of considering the proposed alterations of the Bill with respect to the turnpike trusts, he then felt that it was but fair to listen to their suggestion in favour of a withdrawal of the Bill for a brief period, feeling convinced of the truth of their statement that the passing of the Bill would not in reality be delayed by such withdrawal. In order to avoid all suspicion as to his having abandoned the measure, he had stated that immediately on the withdrawal of the Bill he intended to move for leave for its reintroduction.

Mr. W. MILES thought that the Government had exercised a most wise discretion in consenting to withdraw this Bill. It must be apparent, from what had already been said, that the principal ground on which the Bill was objected to was the mode in which it was proposed to deal with the existing debts of the turnpike trusts. If the Government consented to withdraw this Bill, he should not offer any obstruction to the first reading of the new Bill. A pause of ten days, or at least a week, should be allowed in the discussion of this question, so that the country might fairly understand on what principle this Bill proceeded.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Bill withdrawn.

PUBLIC ROADS (No. 2) BILL.

Mr. CORNEWALL LEWIS moved for leave to bring in a new Bill, for the management of highways and turnpike roads.

Mr. HENLEY took that opportunity of asking the hon. Gentleman when he intended to lay on the table of the House a copy of all returns in his possession relating to this subject, and particularly of such as he had alluded to in the course of that day's debate. It was desirable that copies thereof should be printed and laid on the table as early as possible.

Mr. G. C. LEWIS: I believe that all the numerical statements which I have made to-day are extracted from the printed returns which are now upon the table of the House, with the single exception of one statement with regard to the payment of highway officers, and litigation in respect of highways; but I moved yesterday for a return of those expenses, &c. They are now in course of preparation, and will be presented, I hope, in a few days.

Leave given.

Bill to consolidate and amend the laws relating to Public Roads in England and North Wales, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cornewall Lewis and Sir George Grey.

OFFENCES (IRELAND) BILL.

Order for second reading read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

SIR H. W. BARRON, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said, he would confine himself to a very few observations as to its objects, which were three, namely, first, to prevent the confinement of persons accused of petty offences in Ireland in the county gaols of that country for a considerable time, as was the case under the present system. Parties accused of offences of a very trifling description were at present sent off to the county gaols, which in some cases were thirty or forty miles distant, at a great expense to the county, to await their trial. Witnesses were obliged to go to the county assizes to prosecute those petty offences; counsel were employed, and considerable expenses otherwise incurred in the prosecution. Some of the parties so accused had to wait seven, eight, nine, ten, or perhaps thirteen weeks, until the commencement of their trials; and if convicted, the Judge could not inflict a heavier punishment than fifteen or twenty-one days. The present system, therefore, was monstrously unjust to the prisoners, as well as to the county. In addition to these injustices, there was another evil. The prisoners so confined previous to their trials, suffered grievously from the overcrowded state of the gaols; disease was engendered, and the greatest possible inconvenience incurred. He himself knew two gaols which were built to accommodate, the one 150, and the other 200 prisoners; the former, at the present moment, was obliged to contain 530 prisoners, and the latter 643. The consequence was, that no classification of the prisoners could take place; the morals and health of the prisoners were injured; and the county was put to an enormous expense for their maintenance. Every one of the parties indicted for petty offences, on the average, costs the country 15*l.* for prosecution. Was it not monstrous that for a theft of 2*s.* 6*d.* or 1*s.*, the county should be put to an expense of 15*l.* or 20*l.*? This Bill would relieve the counties from those expenses. The greater part of the details of this measure had been already sanctioned by the Legislature; it was founded on the Dublin Police Act. In fact, this Bill proposed to give to the magistrates, at petty sessions, in Ireland, the same powers as were possessed by the magistrates of Dublin for the trial of petty offences. He had not introduced this Bill unadvisedly. In framing this Bill, he had had the assistance of three of the most experienced assistant barristers in Ireland; one of them was celebrated in Ireland for his knowledge of the law, and his able administration of justice—he alluded to Mr. Berwick. He did not intend at present to enter into the details of this measure; there might, undoubtedly, be many objections raised to those details, some deeming them too stringent, and others too lenient; but to the general principle of the Bill he thought there could be no objection whatever. To those who might contend that the Bill was too stringent, he had only to say that the same stringency had been sanctioned by the Legislature in the adoption of the Dublin Police Bill. The penal clauses had been copied almost verbatim from that Bill, which had been found to work admirably; in fact, not a single complaint had been made against it. One hon. Gentleman, with whom he had had some conversation as to this Bill, had said by way of ridicule that it would prevent him from smoking a cigar in the street. That was a most absurd construction of the measure. It proposed to impose penalties on any party lighting a fire in the public streets, to the annoyance, danger, or alarm of Her Majesty's subjects; and who could pretend that there was any difficulty in understanding the true meaning of that enactment? The hon. Baronet, after some further remarks, concluded by expressing his readiness to listen to any amendment which the House might propose, and which might be dealt with at the next stage of the Bill.

MR. H. DRUMMOND was not aware of the character of the Dublin Police Act, but if it resembled this Bill, and it were before the House, he should treat it as he would this, and use his utmost exertions to get it rejected. He was sure there was nothing so funny in all the statutes that had ever passed, from the earliest period to the present time—although many of them contained very ridiculous things—as there was in the Bill before the House. It appeared by the preamble that the object of the Bill was, in the first place, to ensure the punishment of offences; and, secondly, to ensure the more speedy trial of offenders; and the means by which it was proposed in the preamble itself to effect that object, was to inflict a penalty of 40*s*. upon any publican who might sell a glass of gin or other spirits to any boy or girl apparently under the age of sixteen years. The third clause imposes a penalty of 40*s*. for a vast variety of offences; and, amongst other strange things, it declares that such fine should be inflicted on any person having the care of, or driving any cart, car, or carriage, upon any public highway or thoroughfare, who shall ride upon such cart, car, or carriage, without having or holding the reins, and not having some person on foot to guard the same. By another part of the clause the penalty was imposed "on any person who shall break, destroy, or damage any tree or shrub in any public or private walk or garden, or any part thereof;" so that any poor labouring man who might pluck a bit of sweetbriar out of a hedge, might be taken up and imprisoned if he could not pay this fine. By another clause this punishment is extended to any person who shall steal the whole or any part of any tree, sapling, or shrub, or any underwood, or any root or plant, being raised from the soil. Then, again, the sheriffs were bound to obey the orders made by the magistrates at petty sessions, under this Bill. It appears also that constables were to be allowed to act without any warrant or information. According to the 17th Clause, it is enacted, "That it shall and may be lawful for any constable to stop and detain, until due inquiry can be made, all persons with horses, carts, and carriages, which he shall find employed in removing furniture, corn, hay, potatoes, or any other goods, between the hours of eight in the evening and six in the morning, whenever the constable shall have reasonable ground for believing that such removal is fraudulently made for the purpose of evading the payment of rent;" so that any constable, at his own whim and pleasure, may take up and detain any person whom he chooses to suppose that he has reasonable ground for believing that he is fraudulently moving his property; and this can be done without the party so detained or imprisoned being able to obtain the slightest redress. The next clause was of a still more extraordinary character, for it enacts, "That if any person shall be found by night on any land, or concealed in any house, without excuse, such person shall be liable to a penalty of not more than 40*s*." The next clause also enacts, "That it shall and may be lawful for any constable, and for all persons whom he shall call to his assistance, to take into custody, without a warrant, any persons who, within view of such constable, shall offend in any manner against this Act; and if any person so called upon shall refuse to aid such constable, he shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding 5*l*." The next clause enacted, "That any person found committing any offence punishable, upon indictment, or by summary conviction, may be taken into custody without a warrant by the owner of the property in or with respect to which the offence was committed, or by his servant, or any person, and may be detained until he can be delivered into the custody of a constable to be dealt with according to law." How could any man put any rational interpretation upon such a clause as that? The 21st Clause declared, "That for every offence against this Act, for which no special penalty is appointed, the offender shall, at the discretion of the justices before whom the conviction shall take place, be liable to a penalty of not more than 2*l*." By the 23rd Clause, any justice may, without issuing any summons, forthwith issue his warrant for the apprehension of any person charged with any offence cognisable before him, whether or not good grounds for so doing shall be laid before him. It was clear from this and other enactments, that it was intended to permit any Irishman to arrest any other Irishman whenever he pleased. The 31st Clause provided, "That all offences committed, which, under this or any other Act, are punishable on summary conviction before a justice or justices of the peace, may be heard and determined by one or more justices sitting at petty sessions in a summary way, whether or not any information or writing shall previously have been exhibited or taken by or before a justice." The object of this evidently was to prevent any person who had been wrongfully arrested obtaining any redress in the higher courts. It was enacted that no informations in writing were necessary so as to prevent justices issuing warrants without due grounds. Then came the interpretation clause, which was still more extraordinary, for it declared, after having enacted that male persons in certain cases should be probably whipped, "that the masculine gender shall be extended to a female as well as a male." There was, however, one redeeming clause in this Bill, namely, "That this Act shall extend to

Ireland alone," for it was in Ireland alone that such a law could be framed.

MR. E. B. ROCHE congratulated the hon. Baronet (Sir H. W. Barron) on having produced something worse than even the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act. He agreed with the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, that from beginning to end, this Bill exceeded all the ridiculous Bills that had ever preceded it. The hon. Baronet should have declared in the preamble that it was a Bill to empower anybody in Ireland to take up anybody, for doing anything or for doing nothing—for, practically, that was the principle of the Bill. He should be glad to know what despotic Act in Ireland might not be justified under the provisions of this Bill? It proposed to make constables and magistrates irresponsible for any act of which they might be guilty in the execution of their offices, however arbitrary or unjust. A great deal had been said about "domestic legislation," but this was "domestic legislation" with a vengeance. He had not risen so much to argue against the Bill, however, for it was only requisite to read it to reject it; but he rose to protest against being considered to be in any way connected with it; conceiving that nothing could be imagined more calculated to render Irish Members ridiculous.

COLONEL DUNNE said, he was anxious to offer an explanation, for his name was on the back of the Bill. He had felt that some such measure was requisite; but he had not been aware of the exact nature of the Bill, of which he had not read a word. He was convinced that legislation was necessary with regard to parties accused of petty offences lying in prison for so long a time; but he could not support this measure. Now that his hon. Friend had called the attention of the Government to the subject, he would probably not think it expedient to persevere with the Bill.

MR. STAFFORD said, that as hon. Members on the other side had disclaimed all participation in the Bill, he thought it necessary also to say, that Gentlemen on that (the Opposition) side of the House had nothing at all to do with it. He thought it perhaps might have been a part of the grand comprehensive scheme of the Government, but it now appeared to be the work of an individual Member.

SIR G. GREY said, that repudiation seemed to be the order of the day, for he had himself intended to rise before to say, that it was impossible the Bill could be entertained in its present shape; but, after the observations which had fallen from so many Irish Members, he hoped that it would be unnecessary to move that it be read a second time that day six months, as the hon. Baronet would probably withdraw it. Amongst the remarkable defects of the Bill, it might be observed that it created a great number of petty offences, making them punishable by fine; but yet gave no power of enforcing the fine in the usual way, by imprisonment. For instance, a beggar would be liable to a fine of 40*s*., but how that was to be enforced was unprovided for. The provisions of the Bill had, in fact, nothing to do with the title of it; and he would advise the hon. Baronet to consult with other Irish Members, and especially with the hon. Member whose name was upon the back with his own.

MR. NAPIER said, that so completely "comprehensive" a measure had certainly never been proposed for Ireland since the legislative Union. Why, one clause referred to "persons, horses, donkeys, or any other animals." So that that "other animal" might be a two-legged or a four-legged donkey. The most "comprehensive" clause, however, was the 30th, which rendered punishable any person who should offend against "this or any other Act of Parliament, who might be arrested by any other person with or without warrant."

MR. H. A. HERBERT said, the House had probably received amusement enough from the Bill. But he hoped instruction also might be acquired from it—for the people of Ireland had hitherto been in the habit of hearing the repeal or liberal party in Ireland represented as the peculiar protectors and champions of popular liberty. He hoped these professions, in future, would be contrasted with the Draconic code of the leader of the "moral force" repealers of Waterford.

MR. J. O'CONNELL said, that party had no claim on the hon. Baronet (Sir H. W. Barron); they repudiated him as a moral force repealer. He might more properly be styled a constabulary force repealer. The measure was objectionable on many grounds; amongst others, it went to revive the disgusting punishment of whipping. He could not think that these extraordinary provisions had emanated from

Mr. Berwick, or that he had ever seen them.

Sir H. W. BARRON said, he would pledge his reputation that he had not drawn the Bill. He had not drawn, neither had he suggested, a single line of it. The Bill was presented to him as the suggestion of three assistant barristers in Ireland, and a chairman of quarter-sessions. Mr. Berwick was the person who corrected and drew up the details of the Bill, and he was one of the most eminent men in his profession. For his own part, he could have no personal interest in the matter, but had merely brought in the Bill at the request of the gentlemen who had placed it in his hands. He believed that there was not a single punishment inflicted by the Bill which might not be by law inflicted in England, and in the city of Dublin also, under its Police Bill, by a more circuitous route. The hon. Baronet then entered into a general defence of the provisions of the Bill, the effect of which, he said, had been distorted by mutilated quotations and half references, and concluded by expressing regret that the hon. Member for Kerry (Mr. H. Herbert) should have thought proper to make an attack, which he did not mean to retort, on him personally with reference to a measure in which he could have no personal interest. The hon. Member had referred to him as the champion of the moral force repealers, though he must have known there was no man more bitterly abused by that party than himself. Far from having any identity of sentiment with him, they had given him several contested elections, and there was no man either in that House or out of it whom they more thoroughly detested.

Mr. H. A. HERBERT begged to retract any expression which could be construed into a personal imputation on the hon. Baronet.

Mr. REYNOLDS said, that considering the legal lore which the hon. Baronet alleged had been expended upon this Bill, he had been exceedingly ill-treated in regard to it, As to its provisions, all he (Mr. Reynolds) could say was, that if it were passed in its present shape, the House might safely repeal all the Coercion Acts on the Statute-book. As the Dublin Police Bill had been alluded to, he would say, in respect to that measure, that it was so severe that it had in fact become a dead letter. The hon. Baronet the Member for Waterford had said, in reference to what had fallen from the hon. Member for Kerry, that he (Sir H. W. Barron) was hated by all the moral force repealers. Now he (Mr. Reynolds), as a moral force man, assured the hon. Baronet that he did not hate him at all, and begged to remind him that there was a great deal of difference between hating a man and laughing at him. Not that he was laughing at the hon. Baronet; but he presumed that as the hon. Baronet disclaimed all connexion with the moral force men, he took the other alternative, and belonged to the physical force party.

Mr. P. SCROPE said, that the hon. Baronet the Member for Waterford had distinctly stated that three assistant barristers in Ireland, of great experience, had drawn up this Bill, or consented to its details. If that were so, he submitted to the Government that the names of those barristers should be known, and that a close watch should be kept upon their proceedings ; for the provisions of the Bill clearly showed the animus by which they were actuated. He had never before heard powers so despotic and arbitrary proposed to be granted by a Bill. The object seemed to be, to make the magistrates omnipotent. If this Bill had really been prepared by those gentlemen, he thought the views entertained by them of the criminal law were hardly such as to entitle them to the respect and confidence of the Executive Government.

Sir G. GREY said, it would be extremely unfair to those three gentlemen to condemn them as having drawn up the whole of this Bill, and thereby to cast upon them any obloquy that might arise therefrom, without any evidence whatever of the fact. Gentlemen without professional education, when in conversation with lawyers, might throw out suggestions, which not being perfectly understood, might be assented to; but he could not believe that any gentleman of talent or experience, still less a gentleman accustomed to the administration of the criminal law, could have approved of the Bill before the House in its present form, or have sanctioned its being passed into a law.

Mr. F. O'CONNOR said, such things were not surprising at all in Ireland.

Sir H. W. BARRON begged leave to pledge his reputation that the Bill was actually drawn up by Mr. Berwick; and he presumed the right hon. Baronet did not intend to impute to him (Sir H. W. Barron) wilful mis-statement.

SIR G. GREY replied, most certainly not. He had not the least intention of imputing to the hon. Baronet any wilful misrepresentation. What he meant to say was, that mistakes often occurred in conversation upon legal points, when their meaning was not thoroughly understood. As the hon. Baronet expressly stated that the Bill had been drawn up and placed in his hands by an assistant barrister, he had nothing more to say. He had thought there must have been some misapprehension upon that fact; but as the hon. Baronet asserted it, he was far from disputing it.

MR. NAPIER, as the only Member of the Irish bar present, felt bound to say, that a more respectable or more accomplished gentleman than Mr. Berwick was not to be found in Ireland; and he had certainly heard with astonishment that this Bill had been prepared by him.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Bill withdrawn.

VICE-GUARDIANS OF UNIONS (IRELAND) BILL.

On the report of this Bill being brought up—

Amendments made; Amendment proposed, page 2, line 26, to leave out the words "25th day of March, 1850," and to insert "27th day of September, 1849:" —Question, "That the words '25th day of March, 1850' stand part of the Bill."

COLONEL DUNNE moved the above Amendment. The question, he said, was merely one of convenience and practice. If the guardians were removed in the autumn, just at the time when the poor's rates could be collected, it would be more convenient for the incoming guardians to support the poor throughout the remaining portion of the year.

SIR DENHAM NORREYS would admit that there were more to be relieved in March than in September; but still all the preparations for providing relief would be made in the preceding months of September, October, and November; so that it would be, in his opinion, much safer that the boards of guardians should be elected, and that country gentlemen should come to the working of the poor-law at a time when these preparations had been made, than that they should be called upon to make them themselves. He, therefore, hoped the change would be resisted by a division.

MR. MONSELL suggested, as there was a difference of opinion upon the subject, that the 1st November should be substituted, as it would probably meet the views of all parties.

MR. POULETT SCROPE urged the House to pause before sanctioning a change which would necessarily have the effect of dissolving all boards of vice-guardians, and causing the re-election of the ordinary guardians, at a period when the difficulties of many unions would be probably much greater than they were at present. The elected guardians would have to learn the task which they had neglected to perform last year; and the lamentable circumstances of last autumn might occur over and over again, until matters arrived at such a pitch of aggravation, that the Poor Law Commissioners would be compelled to interfere. The question was one of time, and not of principle; and if the 27th September was inserted, the Commissioners would have no power to interfere until mismanagement had arrived at a crisis that would compel them to supersede the selected boards. The subject should be left to the discretion of the Commissioners; but he certainly believed that if Parliament said the vice-guardians should abdicate their functions, they would be opening the door to a renewal of the frightful scenes of last autumn.

MR. STAFFORD had always considered that one of the greatest constitutional questions strongly maintained in that House, and most, professionally, by hon. Gentlemen opposite, was the connexion between representation and taxation. The question involved in this Bill was not one of time, but one of principle. Further time was asked to continue in the disposal of funds those who had no connexion whatever with the people from whom those funds were derived, and he was willing to concede it; but he contended that its duration should be as short as possible. Would the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stroud (Mr. Scrope) say at what point the question of time ended, and that of principle commenced? He (Mr. Stafford) would call the attention of the House to the moderation exhibited by all the Irish Members, which had led them to refrain from discussing the conduct of the vice-guardians. He had reason to know that there were cases in which their conduct might be very properly brought under the notice of the House; but as the Government had introduced a measure of particular urgency connected with Ireland, the Irish Members had, with great forbearance, consented to waive the subject for the present. The hon. Member for Stroud, however, opened the whole question; and Members connected with Ireland were, therefore, placed in the position either of leaving it to be assumed that all he stated was true, or of appearing to say that the boards of guardians were so inhuman that vice-guardians were, of necessity, appointed. He (Mr. Stafford), perhaps, knew cases of inhumanity, cruelty, and neglect, which the hon. Gentleman, who looked at the question simply as against the landlords, might not be acquainted with, but he should not enter into them now; and he must say, it was not fair for any question as to the vice-guardians to be now introduced. If, therefore, it should be necessary, upon the third reading of the Bill, to open the whole case as to the proceedings of the vice-guardians, the House would remember it was not the Irish Members who introduced the subject, but an English Member, who, whether right or wrong, placed them in the alternative either of debating the subject, or leaving it to be inferred, by all who attached any weight, much or little, to the statements of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stroud, that the sole cause of the boards of guardians being dismissed was, that they had been guilty of inhumanity.

Sir G. GREY said, it would be unfortunate if there was any general discussion upon the conduct of the vice-guardians at the present moment. On a future occasion he should have no objection to enter upon it fully, and he should then be prepared to defend the conduct of the Poor Law Commissioners with regard to the dissolution of boards of guardians. Their dissolution, he believed, might be defended without imputing the slightest fault to those boards; for there were some cases where they themselves wished to be relieved, and in which they were displaced upon their own suggestion and application. With regard to the question of time to be introduced into this Bill, he was sorry to find the general opinion of the Irish Members opposed to the proposition made by the Government. The Government was only anxious on this head to ascertain the most convenient time from those Gentlemen who had local experience. The hon. Member for Limerick had suggested the 1st of November as the most fitting period. To that, on the part of the Government, he had no objection; and if it met with the general concurrence of the House, he would move its insertion in the Bill.

Colonel DUNNE expressed his readiness to withdraw his Amendment, and consent to the substitution of the 1st of November.

Mr. H. A. HERBERT confirmed the statement of his hon. Friend (Mr. Stafford) as to the conduct of the paid guardians in many instances. In one union, he had heard that the accounts had not been audited for many months, and were in inextricable confusion. It should be borne in mind, that the landlords of Ireland were often placed in a position most difficult and embarassing in the administration of the poor-law.

Sir W. SOMERVILLE said, the removal of the boards of guardians was not to be attributed to their neglect or cruelty. He thought, however, a wise discretion had been exercised in not discussing the conduct of the vice-guardians at present; and he must express his acknowledgments to hon. Gentlemen from Ireland for their forbearance on this occasion.

Mr. POULETT SCROPE denied that he had cast an imputation of cruelty on the Irish landlords as a body. What he had said amounted to this, that the majority of the boards dismissed had been guilty of very great mismanagement, and that by their neglect of duty the poor had suffered most cruelly and grievously.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.—Other Amendments made.

Bill to be read 3° To-morrow.

OUTDOOR PAUPERS BILL.

On the Question that the Order of the Day be read for the House resolving itself into a Committee on the Outdoor Paupers Bill,

Sir H. WILLOUGHBY said, that the Bill which they were then about to consider in Committee had only been delivered on the 27th of February, and read a second time at half-past twelve o'clock in the morning. It would of course be in the recollection of the House that very recently the lives of nearly 200 children had been lost in an asylum kept by a person of the name of Drouet; everything relating to this subject had, therefore, become a matter of the highest importance;

upon that ground, then, he did not hesitate to call the attention of the House to the circumstance that great doubts were entertained as to whether the provisions of the Bill would meet the evils and the difficulties of the case. He hoped, then, that the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Baines) would state his views and intentions on the subject. In the first place, he should himself, however, observe, that he saw no reason why the poor should be farmed out of the workhouses; he saw no reason why, whether they were of age or under age, they should be let out to any one to make a profit of them. Every Member of that House would, he felt assured, bear him out in the assertion when he stated, that one great object of the Poor Law Amendment Bill was, that all paupers should be placed within the workhouse; and it especially provided, that if in any case paupers happened to be sent out of the workhouses, the Poor Law Commissioners should have power to make regulations for their protection and government; but the difficulty lay in making such rules obligatory. It was much to be regretted that there existed no effective system of inspection, and to that he more particularly begged to call the attention of the hon. Gentleman opposite, the Chief of the Poor Law Commission. The Commissioners could not have their attention directed to every abuse; they could not have the eyes of Argus; they could not investigate every case at once; and a remarkable illustration of that truth was presented not long since by the results of the Andover inquiry. There was no want of rules in that union; but nevertheless the practice of the union was most blameable; in fact, the occurrences were of a kind so painful that he had no wish to revive the recollection of them. In his opinion, it was in vain to talk of rules, for rules could do no good without an efficient system of inspection, inasmuch as rules could only be enforced by some one near the spot. The want of providing for this system of inspection appeared to him the main defect of the Bill. If houses for the reception of the poor—not being workhouses—existed at all, they must be placed under some sound jurisdiction—that, for example, of the magistrates of the kingdom. There must be such a power, and it might be so given and constituted as to prevent a repetition of the dreadful occurrences which had recently taken place not far from London. This was a truth allowed by every one. Having made these few observations, he had only further to say, that he should be glad to hear what reasons could be alleged for the existence of such houses at all.

Mr. BAINES said, he was very grateful to the hon. Baronet who had just addressed the House for giving him an opportunity of making a short statement regarding the measure then before them. The recent event to which the hon. Baronet had referred, was one which naturally excited a great degree of interest; but it was a mistake to suppose, as some persons had done, that the system of contracts for the maintenance of the poor originated since the passing of the Poor Law Amendment Act. Nearly 130 years ago it was authorised by the 9th of George I., in the year 1722. By that statute the overseers of the poor were authorised to obtain contracts for the accommodation and maintenance of the poor outside of the workhouse. Ever since then provision for the poor had been contracted for in the manner recognised by statute. Checks and precautions were of course attended to; but there could be no doubt as to the legality of the practice—none whatever. Gilbert's Act provided for sending out all children to parties who might contract for their provision and maintenance; a practice that was deemed advisable with regard to all the Gilbert unions. In the metropolitan districts it was not only permitted by statute, but enjoined; for Hanway's Act, in 1767, made it imperative on the overseers of the metropolitan parishes to send out the children of the poor to be maintained by contract in the country. That enactment remained in force till 1844, when, being repealed, the practice, though still permitted and authorised, was no longer enjoined. He should endeavour to give an historical account of the state of pauperism generally in those houses which did not properly come under the denomination of workhouses, for he thought that the House would be anxious to receive information on the subject, and he therefore had taken some pains to make himself acquainted with it. He was, then, enabled to state that houses of that description scarcely existed anywhere except in the metropolis. They had been legal ever since the time of George I., either as substitutes or auxiliaries; but still he found scarcely any trace of them in the provincial districts. As to the districts in the neighbourhood of the metropolis, he found that in London, Middlesex, Kent, and Surrey, there were seven institutions of that description. There were two of them at Stepney and Peckham, where paupers belonging to the city of London union were sent, but they would probably be superseded before the end of the present year, as a good workhouse was being built. Those establishments would, therefore, die a natural death. A third institution, of which he had no doubt many hon. Members had heard, was that of Mr. Aubyn, at Norwood, in which there were somewhat less than 1,200 children. That was an institution which, he believed, had been thought extremely well of by those who had visited it. He was not aware that any complaints had been made with regard to it—the establishment was in an exceedingly healthy situation—and no one could doubt that, in an establishment of that kind, if it was well conducted, the children's interests were more cared for than they possibly could be in an overcrowded workhouse, or if they were allowed to run about the streets. There were also two other institutions at Margate, one of them containing 131 persons, and the other 133, comprising both adults and children. These were establishments to which paupers, who required the benefit of sea air, were sent from different workhouses; there could be no doubt they were extremely valuable institutions; and he believed there had never been any cause of complaint against them—at least all the inquiries he had made led him to that conclusion. There was also a small institution near Welling, in Kent, where there were 44 adult paupers who were sent from a particular union in the city of London. The only remaining institution of this kind was one at Brixton, where there were 195 pauper adults and infants; and he understood that, with regard to that house, there had been practically no ground of complaint. These were the institutions, seven in number, with respect to which it was necessary to adopt some legislative measures. He purposely abstained from referring to events which had taken place at Tooting, because they were about to be made the subject of investigation in a criminal court of justice. On that account he would not say anything whatever with regard to the conduct of the person at the head of that establishment; but he thought what had taken place there—whether that person was to blame or not—furnished a strong illustration of the necessity of some further powers being given by the Legislature with respect to such institutions. It was manifest, at all events, that the system was open to abuse; and he trusted this Bill would enable them to take effectual precautions against the recurrence of such abuses, so long as houses of this kind might exist. He did not think it likely that those establishments would be retained for any long period; but he considered that the law could not at once interpose to destroy the property of particular persons — that property having been created under the law as it had stood for 120 years past—without any fault on the part of those persons. He thought the House would rather be disposed to legislate with a view to the regulation of such houses, and to the prevention of abuses. By the Poor Law Amendment Act very ample powers were given with regard to the regulation of workhouses; but with respect to such houses as he had mentioned, what were called "contract houses," nothing like the same kind of effective control was provided by the Legislature. The person at the head of an establishment of that kind could by no means be called the paid servant of any union or parish, and still less could his assistants be called the "paid officers"—the term which he believed was used in the Poor Law Amendment Act—of any union or parish, so as to give the poor-law board, or the boards of guardians, the power of interfering with them, as they could interfere with the paid officers of any parish or union. Hence the most that had been done in time past with regard to such persons by the Poor Law Board and Commissioners had been to visit them now and then, and to give advice as to their management; but the Board had always felt that they did not possess that kind of efficient control which had been given them with regard to workhouses, and which, he submitted, ought to be given them with reference to houses of this description. He hoped that, by the Bill now before the House, effectual means of control would be provided. In the first place, it would give to the Poor Law Board the power of prescribing rules for the management of all houses of this kind. There were certain general rules which would be applicable to all institutions of this nature; but, as their number was so small, it was clear that, if necessary, the Board could issue rules applicable to them individually, to suit the circumstances of each particular case. The Board also proposed to take a power, which he thought very material, to mould the contracts which might be entered into between the guardians on the one hand, and the contractors on the other. In the Poor Law Act of 1844 an analogous power was given to the Poor Law Commissioners, to mould the contracts between masters and parish apprentices. Up to that time there had been very great diversity in the form of the indentures by which parish apprentices were bound; but by the Act then passed power was given to the Commissioners to mark out certain terms, and to insist upon their being introduced into every indenture. The present Bill proposed that the Poor Law Board should have the power of laying down certain terms, and insisting that they should form part and parcel of every contract that might be entered into between the contractor and the guardians, with regard to paupers, whether adults or infants. The Board also proposed to take power to enforce the observance of these regulations so laid down, by penalties; and this Bill would give them a power, which they did not possess at present, of summarily dismissing altogether the contractor, or any servants of the establishment, if there was any substantial ground of charge against them. The Board could then step in, if they saw occasion, and say, "This servant or officer is unfit for his situation; we think he does not do justice to the pauper children under his charge, and we insist upon his dismissal." In the latter part of this Bill very effective powers of visitation were given. He begged to thank the hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Henley) for a suggestion, of which he (Mr. Baines) had availed himself, and which would simplify this part of the Bill. The 7th and 8th sections of the Bill as they now stood would provide with respect to houses of this kind the same powers of visitation that had been provided by the Poor Law Amendment Act with regard to workhouses; but he thought upon consideration that if the first three lines of the 7th section were struck out, and the power of visitation was left to the justices, all the exigencies of the case would be met, and ample powers of visitation would be afforded. The magistrates might, whenever they thought fit, without giving any notice, visit houses of this description; they might authorise physicians, surgeons, or the parochial medical officers, to inspect such houses, and to report to them; and then, of course, reports would be made to the Poor Law Board, who also had their own inspectors, who by a former Act of Parliament were empowered to visit any houses in which paupers were kept. He trusted, therefore, that by this Bill they had made every provision, as far as it was in human power to do so, for the safety and welfare of every class of paupers, and especially of that class who were peculiarly unprotected, and who had a strong claim upon their sympathy and attention—the class of pauper children. He looked forward to the day when houses of this kind would be rendered unnecessary by the introduction of establishments like those district schools which were marked out in the Act of 1844. Hitherto they had met with great difficulties in the establishment of such schools; but he was happy to state that one good consequence of the recent melancholy event at Tooting had been this—that in the city of London, and in all the metropolitan districts, they now found among many influential persons the strongest desire to carry out the provisions of the Act of Parliament with regard to district schools. He begged to apologise for having taken up so much of the time of the House; but he considered that he owed it to the House and to the public to give this explanation.

Mr. HENLEY believed, that the hon. Gentleman's statement would give great satisfaction, not only to the House, but to the country. He thought the Government had taken the only course that was open to them; and that till pauper children were provided for in public establishments, these institutions ought to be made as far as possible public establishments by extending to them the laws which applied to such establishments. Some of the provisions of the Bill might appear rather stringent, but it must be remembered that no man came under their operation except by his own free will.

Mr. POULETT SCROPE had been very glad to hear the lucid and able statement of the hon. Gentleman, and he had no doubt it would be satisfactory to the public, among whom considerable anxiety existed on this subject. There was, however, one point which had not been touched upon by the hon. Gentleman. He (Mr. Baines) had referred to the recent occurrences at Tooting, and had said he thought it unadvisable, as the case was about to come before a court of justice, to enter into the question of the responsibility of the master of that establishment. He

(Mr. Poulett Scrope) wished, however, to call the attention of the House to the responsibility of the Poor Law Commissioners with respect to that case. It appeared to him that the Commissioners had, to a great extent, possessed the power of interference with such institutions, and he thought it a most lamentable circumstance that that power had not been exercised. No one could hesitate for a moment to admit that it was absolutely necessary, for the safety of the children in these establishments, that such powers as had been alluded to by the hon. Gentleman should be conferred on some person; but he considered that these powers, or some of them, had already been conferred upon the Poor Law Commissioners by the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834. To the best of his judgment and belief the 49th section of that Act authorised the Poor Law Commissioners to exercise such control over these establishments as would have enabled them to provide for the proper maintenance and treatment of the inmates. [The hon. Gentleman read the section to which he referred, and which provides that any contract which shall be entered into by any parish or union for the maintenance, clothing, lodging, or relief of the poor, which shall not be made and entered into in conformity with the rules, orders, or regulations of the Commissioners, or otherwise sanctioned by them, shall be voidable.] He did not profess to give a legal opinion as to the application of this clause, but it appeared to him that it conferred upon the Commissioners ample powers, which he thought they ought to have exercised. The Commissioners could not be ignorant of the fact that children were farmed out in great numbers at such establishments as had been referred to by the hon. Gentleman; and surely—being aware of that fact—they ought to have overhauled the contracts, and ascertained that they were prudent and proper, and, if not, they should have voided them. In making this remark, he did not mean to throw the slightest imputation upon the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Baines), who had only recently come into office, nor upon the predecessor of that Gentleman (Mr. C. Buller), who had held office for so short a period that no one could cast the shadow of blame upon him for not having interfered in the matter. He thought it most unfortunate, however, that former Commissioners, having had ample time for the purpose, had not inquired into the nature of the contracts, to ascertain whether they were sufficiently guarded to secure the due maintenance of the children, and that in the event of their proving otherwise, they had not rescinded them. He understood that none of these contracts had ever been laid before the Commissioners, and that, in fact, in the Tooting case there was no written contract, but a mere verbal arrangement. He entertained a strong opinion that on this point the Poor Law Commissioners had been deeply culpable, and that they were to a great extent responsible for the neglect of the children by the parish officers and the contractor, because they had not exercised the powers conferred upon them by the Act of 1834.

The House then went into Committee.

On Clause 7, providing the power of inspection by justices of the peace,

Sir H. WILLOUGHBY said, he was still of opinion that a more efficient inspection might be adopted. Suppose the justices did not attend to the duty, what was to be the result? He would wish to see provision made for a periodical inspection, say once a month.

Mr. BAINES observed, that the poor-law inspectors, as he had before stated, were already armed with full authority to visit such establishments, and it was now proposed to give the power of visitation to the magistrates, who might exercise it when they chose. He thought it certainly ought not to be assumed that the magistrates would not do their duty.

Sir H. WILLOUGHBY considered that an inspection was requisite, which might be in some degree independent of the Poor Law Board. A poor-law inspector visiting these establishments would be influenced by the feeling of the Board for the time being, whatever it might be; and he thought it would be well to appoint other persons, retired medical men or others, to visit these institutions from time to time. Without some such arrangement he thought they had no security that the inspection would be conducted by men who were not afraid to speak out their minds. They had had proof, in his opinion, that the system of inspection under the Poor Law Commissioners had been most inefficient.

Sir G. GREY observed, that if, in compliance with the hon Baronet's suggestion, additional visitors were appointed, they would necessarily be connected in some degree with the poor-law establishment, and would be open to the charge he had made against the officers of that establishment. In order to provide an independent inspection, the Bill proposed to vest the visitation in the justices of the peace, by whom, he had no doubt, it would be satisfactorily conducted.

MR. BAINES said, that under this seventh clause, the justices of the peace would have precisely the same power of visitation, with regard to these establishments, as they at present had with respect to workhouses; and, in addition to the power of visiting themselves, they were authorised to direct visitation by physicians, surgeons, or other persons.

The clause was then agreed to, as were the remaining clauses of the Bill.

Bill reported with Amendments.

Bill, as amended, to be considered Tomorrow.

House adjourned at a quarter before Six o'clock.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

SPEECH OF HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF ARGYLL IN FAVOUR OF THE REGISTERING BIRTHS, &c. (SCOTLAND) BILL.—MONDAY, FEBRUARY, 19, 1849. (*See* p. 865.)

The DUKE of ARGYLL said, he was wholly unable to sympathise in the objections of the noble Earl (the Earl of Aberdeen) against this Bill. In the first place, he did not conceive it to be true that it had been introduced merely to supplement the Registration Bill—an assumption of the noble Earl's, in support of which he had adduced no proof whatever. It was true, indeed, that the two Bills had been introduced together; but he conceived the more rational supposition to be, that as marriage before a registrar was one of the modes contemplated by this Bill, it was needful to provide for the existence of such an officer. The principal objection, however, of the noble Earl, he (the Duke of Argyll) understood to be, that it limited to a dangerous degree the existing facilities for the contraction of marriage. Now, he (the Duke of Argyll) must recall the attention of the House to the real state of the case. The existing law of Scotland recognised all marriages performed before clergymen, and also marriages contracted in the various clandestine and irregular modes which had been variously described by the noble and learned Lords who spoke before. The Bill now before the House proposed to foreclose for the future all those irregular and clandestine modes of contracting marriage, but to recognise, as before, all marriages performed before clergymen—that was to say, before all ministers of all sects and denominations whatsoever; and farther, it provided for those few persons who might object to be so married, that the contract might be entered into as a civil one, before a regular public functionary, the registrar. Now, he was utterly unable to comprehend how the noble Earl (the Earl of Aberdeen) could anticipate from such a measure any dangerous effect whatever upon the social habits of the people of Scotland. What had the noble Earl himself declared in his speech on that occasion? He had said, and said truly, that so strong were the moral feelings and religious associations of the people of Scotland, that they almost invariably married under the sanction of religion, and that the instances were comparatively few in which they married otherwise. How, then, could the noble Earl anticipate such dangerous effects from the removal of those facilities, which he himself told them were so rarely taken advantage of? It was true that the change in the law would be great; but there need be no change whatever in the practice of the people. He (the Duke of Argyll) trusted that no misapprehension would go forth to the people of Scotland, that this Bill would in any way interfere with their social habits, or encourage secular marriages. There was nothing in the Bill which could have that effect; and he trusted that the people of Scotland would always continue to marry with the solemnities of religion. So far as pecuniary inducements could affect the practice, this Bill presented a considerable advantage in favour of marriages performed before clergymen. He agreed with the noble Earl (the Earl of Aberdeen) that consent was the principal element in the contract of marriage; but surely every reasonable precaution should be taken that that consent should be a deliberate consent; not the consent merely of a moment's passion, but one avowed in the face of the world, and of those who had any right to judge of the propriety of the circumstances under which it was given. He was quite unable to feel the force of the objections urged by the noble Earl, and therefore felt bound to give his support to the measure before the House.

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